

# Australian Defence Force JOURNAL

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## CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Welcome to Issue No. 196 of the *Australian Defence Force Journal*.

This edition contains several articles of direct relevance to the forthcoming 2015 Defence White Paper, including the feature article on Australia's submarine capability by the Chief of Navy.

It is also particularly pleasing that the issue includes an impressive cross-section of contributors, from each of the Services, from a wide range of ranks, and from both public servants and academics, reflecting the disparate nature of those who now regularly contribute to the 'contest of ideas' regarding the ADF and the 'profession of arms' in Australia.

The article by Colonel Wade Stothart, arguing the need for an Australian 'grand strategy', has been judged the 'best article' in this issue. Colonel Stothart, who attended the 2014 Defence and Strategic Studies Course at the Australian Defence College, will receive a certificate personally signed by the CDF and Secretary of Defence.

Craig Beutel, who attended the 2014 Australian Command and Staff College staff course, then usefully compares the 2009 and 2013 Defence White Papers, highlighting some conclusions that may be relevant to the 2015 paper. This is followed, as an interesting historical digression, by an article from Associate Professor Craig Stockings on Australian 'coalition' operations in South Africa in 1900. Although his analysis has no direct 'so what' for the ADF, astute readers will no doubt deduce some important lessons for contemporary operations.

Brigadier Marcus Thompson provides some observations from his deployment as an 'embedded' staff officer in Afghanistan, making a number of recommendations particularly related to enhanced interoperability with the US. Chaplain Peter Devenish-Mearns then offers some thoughtful insights into the treatment of mental health, drawing from his experience in support of recent operational deployments.

Wing Commander Andrew Hoffmann, another student from the 2014 Australian Command and Staff College staff course, addresses the 'future of the ADF', using lessons from the Second World War and the Cold War to inform the way ahead for the ADF as it prepares for the next 15 years. Sub Lieutenant Nam Nguyen then examines some of the strategic and legal challenges in developing an effective cyber warfare capability, a topic of undoubted contemporary importance.

Dr Robert Johnson of Oxford University offers a discerning analysis of the difficulties of predicting future war, arguing that while the current trends of war are an incomplete guide to the future operating environment, they give some shape to its likely direction. The final article is a joint contribution by Emma Wensing and Dr Samantha Crompvoets on workplace flexibility in the ADF, complementing the article by Associate Professor Abby Cathcart and colleagues which we featured in our last edition.

The issue concludes with a selection of book reviews. As always, we remain keen to hear from readers wishing to join the list of reviewers, who are sent books provided to the Editor by publishers. If you are interested, please provide your contact details and area of interest to the Editor at [publications@defence.adc.edu.au](mailto:publications@defence.adc.edu.au) We will also shortly be updating the 'guidance to reviewers', providing clearer guidelines on the purpose of such reviews and what we would expect them to contain.

The July/August edition will be a 'general' issue, although—depending on the timing of its release—we will welcome further contributions relating to the 2015 Defence White Paper. Contributions for that issue should be submitted to the Editor, at the email address above, by mid May. Submission guidelines are on the *Journal* website: see [www.adfjournal.adc.edu.au](http://www.adfjournal.adc.edu.au)

I hope you enjoy this edition and would encourage your contribution to future issues.

**Simone Wilkie, AM**  
Major General  
Commander, Australian Defence College  
Chair of the Australian Defence Force Journal Board

## **FORTHCOMING SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES**

### **30 March-1 April 2015**

Australia's Future Surface Fleet Conference  
Australian Strategic Policy Institute  
Hyatt Hotel, Canberra  
<https://www.aspi.org.au/events/australias-future-surface-fleet-conference>

### **31 March 2015**

AMP China Lecture  
Professor Cheng Li  
Lowy Institute, Sydney  
<http://www.lowyinstitute.org/events/amp-china-lecture-sydney>

### **5-6 May 2015**

DSTO Partnerships Week  
DSTO Edinburgh  
<http://www.dsto.defence.gov.au/event/dsto-partnerships-week-2015>

### **6-8 October 2015**

Pacific 2015 - RAN Sea Power Conference  
Theme 'The Future of Sea Power'  
Sydney Exhibition Centre, Glebe  
<http://www.pacific2015.com.au>

### **NOTE**

To advertise forthcoming seminars and conferences in future issues of the *Journal*, please email details to the Editor  
[publications@defence.adc.edu.au](mailto:publications@defence.adc.edu.au)

# Australia's Submarine Capability <sup>1</sup>

**Vice Admiral Tim Barrett, AO, CSC, RAN, Chief of Navy**

Perhaps, in part, because I spent so much of my early career hunting submarines, as an aviator in Sea King helicopters, I feel a great affinity with our submariners. Military aviation and submarines both came of age a century ago; they are both defining capabilities for all modern naval forces; they both place unique demands on people and systems in unforgiving environments; and they often enjoy an enviable *esprit de corps*.

Looking back over the history of our submarines over the past 100 years, I see much from which we might learn and a great deal of which the RAN can be very proud. The first thing that we can learn is the value of a balanced fleet.

In 1914, the RAN was a small but effective force. Over the first few months of the First World War, it carried out most of the tasks we would expect the Navy to be able to carry out today. The Navy successfully transported the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force to Rabaul and the first Anzac convoy to the Middle East—two events which have recently been commemorated.

These were our first amphibious operations and some of our first strategic lift tasks. While the Rabaul operation was not without cost, with the submarine *AE1* in particular being lost at sea, our ships cooperated with British, Japanese and French vessels to seize Germany's Pacific colonies and to shut down its communications network in the region.

The Navy was successful in its first ship-on-ship engagement—and in November 2014 I attended the ceremony at Cocos Island where we commemorated the crews of both HMAS *Sydney* and SMS *Emden*—crews who fought their ships to their utmost and then, once the battle was over, put the same energy into saving life. And in 1915, just a year after its delivery voyage, the submarine *AE2* was successful in offensive operations; the first Allied submarine to penetrate the Dardanelles and enter the Sea of Marmora.

The Navy also played a large role in **detering** the German East Asian Squadron from operating around Australia and our region. It is worth understanding how that deterrent effect was achieved—a subject which is very well captured in Dr David Stevens' new history of the Navy in the First World War, *In All Respects Ready*.<sup>2</sup> It describes the significant achievement of having a balanced capable fleet, including our two submarines, available and ready for operations from the outset of the war, and their immediate deployment to secure our interests in the Pacific and beyond.

That Fleet was significant on many accounts but not the least as a clear statement of the nation's intent to uphold its sovereignty, secure its borders and protect its interests—and as an irrefutable demonstration of its capacity to do so. The deterrent effect of the Fleet was largely resident in the capabilities of the battlecruiser HMAS *Australia*, just as today it is largely resident in our submarine capability, our principal strategic deterrent.

Against that background, I think it worthwhile to set out again why Australia has submarines as part of a balanced Navy and ADF force structure.

So, why do we have submarines? The short answer is 'deterrence'. In many minds, deterrence is associated with nuclear weapons and the world's major powers. However, deterrent effects are not only derived from nuclear weapons. While other nations and larger navies achieve a strategic deterrent effect through the deployment of nuclear weapons, Australia as a middle and regional power can and does achieve a similar effect through its conventional submarine capability.

The ability of our submarines to deploy at range and exercise freedom of manoeuvre, while avoiding counter-detection, is predicated on the preservation of stealth—the ultimate tenet of submarine operations. Importantly, because of their attributes, our submarines present as the most capable anti-

submarine warfare platforms in the ADF. They are also likely to be the only naval vessels capable of secure operations along the full length of Australia's sea lines of communication in the foreseeable future, particularly in otherwise non-permissive environments and during combat operations.



**Figure 1: Collins class submarines, HMA Ships *Rankin* (foreground), *Waller* (centre) and *Collins* in transit through Gage Roads, Cockburn Sound**

(photo courtesy RAN)

It is, of course, in the realm of combat operations that submarines are most feared. From their inception, the ability of submarines to deliver decisive combat power has been simply phenomenal and the firepower of Australian submarines has developed impressively throughout the century. The offensive capability of our Navy and, in particular, our submarines, has been critical in shaping Australia's strategic environment. With their unique combination of selective destructive power, stealth, range and endurance, our submarines can deter coercion and aggression against Australia and its interests.

It is this inherent potency of Australian submarines that engenders credibility as either a combatant or a deterrent, or both, and enables them to serve as Australia's principal strategic deterrent capability, demanding the attention of others. As such, they provide the Australian Government with options to respond to the use or threat of force, at a time and location of Australia's choosing under almost any conceivable threat scenario. Given that the Indo-Pacific will be home to more than half of the world's submarines within two decades, our submarine capability will continue to be vital to our national interests.

Understanding the foundations of how to achieve deterrence is crucial in guiding the management and operation of the submarine capability. As Chief of Navy, I have the responsibility as Capability Manager to deliver this deterrent effect with available, seaworthy and battle-worthy submarines.

To be an effective deterrent, a submarine force needs to be able to consistently achieve credible presence in strategically significant locations. ***The deterrent effect of our submarines is built on a foundation of availability and realised through deployability.*** It is vitally important that this fact is understood across the submarine enterprise, the entire system which supports the capability.

Of course, a single submarine does not a submarine force make. The submarine capability is comprised of many constituent parts, including effective logistic and support structures, command and control

systems, submarine safety systems, training systems at sea and ashore, and even submarine search-and-rescue capability. We must be able to sustain and support our submarines across all the fundamental inputs to capability. We must be able to do so from their home port and on lengthy deployments. And we need sufficiently sophisticated metrics to forecast their requirements under different operational conditions.

We must also be able to monitor the performance of our submarine capability with effective feedback mechanisms and **enterprise level agility**—I emphasise agility—to respond to what we learn. Given all of this, continued focus on implementing the recommendations of the Coles Review, which is fundamentally about generating available and capable submarines, is a major strategic priority.<sup>3</sup>

Equally, our determination to generate an expanded and robust submarine workforce now and into the future is predicated on available and deployable submarines. Just as you cannot learn to swim on the internet, you need submarines at sea to build an experienced and proficient force. Our ongoing program of deploying our submarines is underpinned by the availability generated by the submarine enterprise—indeed, it was my pleasure recently to welcome HMAS *Sheean* back from a particularly lengthy, highly successful and classically independent deployment.



**Figure 2: A Collins class submarine during a weapons-firing exercise off the coast of Western Australia**

(photo courtesy RAN)

I have pointed to the importance of potency. We are achieving this through close cooperation with our allies and partners, in particular the US Navy, including of course through our joint combat system and heavyweight torpedo program. However, I reiterate that this potency can only be delivered by available submarines and this requires an effective sustainment system, which is something that is a national responsibility.

What some will see in my discussion of availability is the distinction between the requirements for building and the requirements for sustaining. Here I will be very clear about my experience as an aviator, because I believe aviation and submarines share attributes, and that many key principles in terms of sustaining the capability are similar. In aviation, sustainment is part of the acquisition process; it is part of

the design process. You cannot accept an aircraft into service without a demonstrated, through-life sustainment methodology that can be implemented as you receive the aircraft.

In the submarine context, if ***deterrence is underpinned by availability, then availability is underpinned by sustainment***. And by sustainment, I mean all of those activities I have discussed which sustain our submarine capability. That sustainment must be indigenous—it must be a sovereign capability because the links between sustainment, availability, capability and deterrence are so close. This is not to say close relationships with overseas partners, both in government and industry, are not important—they are of course essential. It is to say that having an effective sustainment system here in Australia is vital.

From a seaworthiness perspective—and I use ‘seaworthiness’ here in the sense of the Defence Seaworthiness System, for which I am responsible—what we need is to have complete knowledge of the submarine we operate, which includes:

- A complete understanding of the design;
- A complete understanding of the design intent; and
- A complete understanding of every aspect of the boat, its systems and all their attributes.

None of that determines the build location. But the principal sustainment location does drive the capability we obtain from our submarine capability.

The RAN’s development as a national institution and, within this, the development of an effective submarine capability has continued to evolve over the last century. Today, our submarines provide Australia with strategic weight. Just as the ability of our submarines to shape our strategic environment is a critical enabler for many of the ADF’s other capabilities, so too the availability, capability and deployability of our submarines are the critical enablers of the strategic deterrent effect that they can and do achieve.

There is no doubt we live in interesting times. For Australia’s submariners, I suspect that this has always been so. For a century now, Australian submarine operations have had a significant impact on both the preservation of peace and on the conduct of war at sea. It is certain in my mind that Australia will continue to need its submarines into the future and that we will need all the strategic weight that they can bring to bear. To achieve this, a clear focus from all quarters of the submarine enterprise on achieving available, capable and deployable submarines is essential.

As we commemorate and celebrate a ‘Century of Silent Service’, I would ask you to look forward with me to a century when Australia’s submarines will achieve even greater prominence as the nation’s principal strategic deterrent.

*Vice Admiral Barrett joined the RAN in 1976 as a Seaman Officer and later specialised in aviation. A dual-qualified officer, he served in HMA Ships Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane and HMS Orkney as a Seaman Officer, and then as Flight Commander in HMA Ships Stalwart, Adelaide and Canberra.*

*His staff appointments include Deputy Director Air Warfare Development, Director Naval Officers’ Postings and Director General of Defence Force Recruiting. He has also served as Commanding Officer 817 Squadron, Commanding Officer HMAS Albatross, Commander Australian Navy Aviation Group, Commander Border Protection Command and, most recently, as Commander Australian Fleet.*

*Vice Admiral Barrett holds a Bachelor of Arts in Politics and History and a Masters of Defence Studies, both from the University of New South Wales. He recently completed the Advanced Management Program at Harvard Business School.*

*Vice Admiral Barrett assumed command of the RAN on 1 July 2014.*



## NOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> This is an edited version of a speech presented at the Submarine Institute of Australia's 7<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference, held in Fremantle from 11-13 November 2014, on the occasion of the recognition of 100 years of submarine service.
- <sup>2</sup> David Stevens, *In All Respects Ready: Australia's Navy in World War One*, Oxford University Press: South Melbourne, 2014.
- <sup>3</sup> John Coles *et al*, *The Study into the Business of Sustaining Australia's Strategic Collins Class Submarine Capability*, Department of Defence: Canberra, 2014, available at <http://www.defence.gov.au/dmo/aboutdmo/currentreviews/colesreview/> accessed 28 January 2015.

# Navigating Uncertain Times: the need for an Australian 'grand strategy' <sup>1</sup>

Colonel Wade Stothart, DSC, AM, Australian Army

## Uncertain times

The world currently faces a complex and challenging security environment. While it could be said that the world has always faced a difficult and demanding security situation, the number, diversity and magnitude of the current challenges have the potential to radically change the current international order in an enduring way. Perhaps it is the most challenging security environment since the end of World War 2, because of the large number of both traditional and non-traditional security threats, accompanied by difficult governance circumstances.

There are a number of key pressure points, at play simultaneously, that have the potential to seriously destabilise and potentially re-design the current world order. The first is the rise of China, with the shift in the balance of power manifesting itself in tensions in the South China and East China Seas over territorial and maritime boundary claims. The second is the crisis in the Ukraine as Russia resists Western influence on its borders, indicating that Europe is not immune to the threat of nation-state aggression, with profound consequences for the European Union and NATO.<sup>2</sup> The third is the civil wars in Iraq and Syria, as part of a larger failure of the 'Arab awakening' and the transfer of radical Jihadism from South Asia to the Middle East.<sup>3</sup> The fourth is the recent fighting between Israel and the Palestinians, suggesting that no sustainable peace will be possible in the current circumstances.<sup>4</sup> The fifth is the ongoing threat of nuclear proliferation in Iran and further developments in North Korea. Lastly, non-traditional security threats are ever present, such as the Ebola pandemic in western Africa, as well as cyber security, water security and climate change concerns.

These challenges are manifesting themselves in many guises. The world has enjoyed an absence of violent great power rivalry and widespread conflict since the end of the Second World War. However, the international system that has overseen this remarkable period of stability is now under threat. The basic unit in the international system, the nation-state, is being subject to a number of pressures. Weak states either cannot control their territory—and are being subject to sectarian and ethnic conflict that threatens their existence—or they are fostering rampant nationalism and encouraging historical enmity that is straining relationships.<sup>5</sup>

The situation is made even more complex by the economic weakness affecting the Western world since the global financial crisis. Additionally, there are broader concerns with the debt and dysfunction of many democratic governments, with some commentators predicting that political decay will lead to disorder on a scale that will result in unstable, destitute and fractured societies.<sup>6</sup> Democracy is in decline,<sup>7</sup> and some commentators assess that the world has entered a period of 'radical uncertainty'.<sup>8</sup>

## The impact on Australia

Australia, as a liberal democratic middle power, is not immune from these global trends and threats. Indeed, the events described above are directly affecting Australia. As a middle power, Australia is heavily reliant on the free market global economy and the security arrangements that support prosperity and stability. There is real concern that Australia's period of relative affluence and stability is about to end and that more difficult economic and security times are ahead. The rise of China and the relative decline of the US have also led some commentators to predict that Australia will eventually face a dilemma of choice between its closest security partner, the US, and its largest trading partner, China.<sup>9</sup>

The international order that has overseen great stability and prosperity in much of the world since 1948 now stands at a turning point. Many nation-states are weakened, the global economic system is fragile and liberal democracy is in need of overhaul.<sup>10</sup> Australia, as a middle power in this international system,

is both strong and vulnerable. Global economic and military power is shifting from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and Australia needs to adjust.

### **An Australian 'grand strategy'**

This article argues that Australia, as a middle power, needs a revised and formal 'grand strategy' to ensure that it navigates the current and future domestic and international environment using all the elements of national power in a sustainable and cogent way to achieve its desired 'ends'.

This grand strategy must strive to build national power in a way that will allow Australia to positively influence the regional and global environment, consistent with Australia's national interests. While it must be proactive, it needs to set realistic goals for a 'middle power' and be flexible enough to deal with the unexpected. Importantly, it must clearly prioritise what is most important to Australia so that scarce and valuable resources can be applied skilfully and not squandered.

'Grand strategy' is defined by Colin Gray as the 'purposeful employment of all instruments of national power'.<sup>11</sup> Such a strategy is important for a nation as it states a clear goal and aligns resources to achieve that goal. The discipline of devising and articulating a grand strategy requires our leaders to think about the big picture, the long term, and obstacles in the way of achievement. A grand strategy should also provide the context and logic that justifies difficult decisions and ensures a coordinated approach and, most crucially, its integrated implementation.<sup>12</sup> Grand strategy is not a military formulation; it is the responsibility of statesmen and -women.

In 2012, the then Australian Prime Minister released the *Australia in the Asian Century* White Paper.<sup>13</sup> This White Paper was a 'plan to build on our strengths and shape our future'.<sup>14</sup> Its stated aim was to 'secure Australia as a more prosperous and resilient nation that is fully part of our region and open to the world'.<sup>15</sup> The paper, however, was criticised for its lofty rhetoric, apparent inconsistencies and lack of resources.<sup>16</sup> Its focus was also almost exclusively internal, making no statement of the type of region or world that Australia seeks. With the election of the Abbott Government in 2013, the *Australia in the Asian Century* White Paper was 'consigned to history' and has not been replaced.<sup>17</sup>

More generally, some commentators have assessed that Australia has been pursuing a 'hedging' strategy, albeit unstated, since the end of the Cold War.<sup>18</sup> Certainly, Australia has actively pursued and supported an open and integrated global and regional political order through bilateral and multilateral forums such as the UN, APEC, ASEAN Regional Forum, the East Asia Summit and the G20. Australia has also sought to strengthen the Australia-US alliance and upgrade its strategic links with Japan and South Korea.<sup>19</sup>

Concurrently, Australia has also been very supportive of China's involvement in regional structures. Australia has also pursued much-needed upgrades to its military forces, particularly air and naval capabilities. Collectively, it can be argued that these efforts constitute a 'hedging' strategy.<sup>20</sup> That is, Australia is 'hedging' against increasing strategic uncertainty in the region by 'soft balancing' (seeking to have the US and China as active participants in regional and global institutions), while at the same time 'external balancing' (by improving its alliance relationship with the US and other allies and partners in the region) and 'internal balancing' (by improving domestic military capabilities in the event of conflict).

Such a strategy may well have been effective for Australia until now. However, this article contends that the pace of change in the global economic and security environment, and the current and potential future difficulties being faced by governments world-wide, including Australia, means that this traditional approach needs to be reviewed. A more formal and publicly-endorsed grand strategy is needed.

The first step is engagement with the people of Australia. There must be a public narrative that informs the Australian people of the complexity, fragility and potential threats evident in the current international system. Much of the Australian public is aware of the crises and developments occurring around the world but it may not be cognisant of their combined direct and indirect impact on Australia. Additionally, the public may not have made the link between the fragile external environment and the need for domestic reform to ensure that Australia, as a nation, is best prepared for both opportunity and uncertainty.

Broadening the level of public debate is essential so that the Government can take the necessary actions to navigate these uncertain times with transparency and understanding. The best way to do this would be via a White Paper, articulating Australia's grand strategy to address the current domestic, regional and international environment. The desired end-state would be public support, commitment and legitimacy.

At the heart of the White Paper would be a clear statement of what Australia seeks which, by definition, must be proactive, not reactive. The aim should be 'for Australia to be domestically strong and seek and support a stable international system, based on the rule of law and an open and free economic trading system'. This would be achieved by a three-pronged strategy: 'to build, bridge and balance'.

## **Build capacity and capacity to build**

Australia must first focus on its domestic capacity. This involves building and improving Australia's political, economic and social solvency. Without these three fundamental capabilities, Australia will not have the national power or 'means' to shape the regional and international environment in pursuit of its interests or 'ends'.

The first priority must be political cooperation. Governments must be able to govern. But increasingly in Australia, entrenched partisan positions are preventing the government-of-the-day from pursuing its agenda. In the words of Paul Kelly, 'Australia risks heading to a new status as a stupid country—a nation unable to solve its public policy problems and, even worse, a nation incapable of even conducting a public debate about them'.<sup>21</sup>

Fault lies on all sides. But it is salutary to be reminded that many of the important economic reforms of the 1980s occurred with bipartisan support.<sup>22</sup> Prime Minister Abbott has stated that he intends to become a more inclusive and more consultative leader, and the Labor Party has mostly offered bipartisan support for a number of recent national security measures.<sup>23</sup> Debate on reform should continue but it should focus on what type of reform—and not reform *per se*.<sup>24</sup>

The second is ongoing economic growth and reform. The Australia economy is in need of reform if it is to maintain the prosperity that Australians have enjoyed over the past two decades.<sup>25</sup> Structural change in the Australian economy is required to rein in the deficit and make industry more competitive in a challenging international environment. This requires bipartisan support for the budget and an open approach to the reform needed in areas such as the federation, tax, health, education and the pension age.

The third is social cohesion. Australia's multicultural society and immigration policies have been a very effective social construct and have delivered economic growth and development. But Australia must not expect that multiculturalism will automatically lead to social cohesion without community effort and understanding. The radicalisation of Australian Muslims is a real threat.<sup>26</sup> Concerted and targeted policy must address this issue. English, education and employment are the start but specific policies need to be developed and implemented that reach out to young Muslims and counter any sense of alienation.<sup>27</sup>

Australia needs political progression, economic reform and social cohesion to ensure that it can maximise its national power and take steps to shape its external environment. The first step in achieving a grand strategy for Australia is to ensure that it is governed well, economically strong and socially cohesive.

## **Bridge the divide and cross the bridge**

The complexity of the developing geostrategic environment means that strategic choices will not be binary or exclusive. Australian policy makers will be presented with decisions on relationships with and among states that encompass cooperation, competition, independence and interdependence.<sup>28</sup> 'Bridging' can be defined as reaching out to other regional and like-minded nations to pursue common interests.

Bridging aims to address strategic uncertainty and the competition between nations through promoting confidence-building measures, interdependence, partnerships and collective responses to areas of mutual opportunity or concern. The aim of the bridging aspect of Australia's grand strategy is to promote cooperation between nations and prevent competition from becoming conflict.<sup>29</sup> Australia's focus should be regional—but not neglect global forums—and should highlight diplomatic and economic means.

Australia has very well-established diplomatic and economic links in the region and they need to be strengthened with key countries and multilateral bodies. Most importantly, Australia's relationship with Indonesia needs to be improved. Indonesia's transformation to a vibrant democracy has been truly impressive. It is a middle power on a growth trajectory to great power status. However, Australian-Indonesian business links have been weak and mutual public perceptions have at times been poor. The economic, security and strategic potential of a close relationship between the two countries is considerable, and Australia should seek the opportunity to elevate its relationship to a fully-fledged strategic partnership as soon as possible.<sup>30</sup>

Australia should also seek to strengthen and broaden its ties with China. As Australia's largest trading partner, Australia's economic well-being is directly linked to further growth in the Chinese economy.<sup>31</sup> Australia's relationship with China is already dominated by these economic links with much mutual benefit. Other aspects of the relationship could be strengthened further. This deeper relationship could also serve to 'reassure' Australia of China's intent to pursue 'peaceful development' and commitment to the core principles of the current world order.<sup>32</sup> That is not to say that as power shifts, the world order does not need to change. But the key tenets of the current world order do not necessarily have to change as the world order takes on an Asian view.<sup>33</sup>

The region is already well served with multilateral bodies. The ASEAN Regional Forum, APEC, the East Asia Summit and associated bodies all address issues of shared interest. There does not need to be additional forums. However, increasing the capacity of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to support them would strengthen Australia's efforts and increase its influence. Many of these regional bodies have been criticised for producing little in the way of concrete outcomes.<sup>34</sup> However, as more global power increasingly shifts to the region, Australia should be prepared to offer whatever assistance is needed to increase the capacity of these organisations to resolve what will likely be increasingly complex and important issues.

The close connections between security and economics must be leveraged in the current environment.<sup>35</sup> Bilateral and multilateral trade agreements need to continue to be pursued both regionally and globally to stimulate economic growth and improve security. The Trans-Pacific Partnership—a pluri-lateral trade agreement involving the US, Japan and ten other countries, including Australia, that together account for a third of world trade—could become one of the world's most expansive trade agreements.<sup>36</sup> Not only would arrangements such as this accelerate trade, when globally it is in decline, but also enhance the security outlook as countries increase their interdependence.<sup>37</sup>

Australia should also act to support and improve confidence-building measures further afield. While Australia's closest neighbours and the countries of the Indo-Pacific are of great importance to it, developments outside this region will also influence Australia's interests. Developments in the Americas, Europe and Africa have always had an effect on Australia, hence Australia should be prepared to constructively engage in global forums that shape international actions in these areas.

The most effective means to achieve this is to engage creatively and expansively with those nations and multilateral forums that have shared interests with Australia. In this way, proactive attempts can be made to shape an international system that is based on the rule of law, is stable and has an open and free economic trading system.<sup>38</sup>

## **Balance the scale**

'Balancing' can be defined as the preparations that Australia will make, and actions that it may take, as a *status quo* middle power, to support the maintenance of the key attributes of the current world order. Whereas 'bridging' is about cooperative pursuit of common interests, 'balancing' is about the capabilities, preparations and actions that may be needed if the key attributes of the current order are not being adhered to or are being ignored, and the scale of Australia's national interests demands action.

It is reasonable to expect that rising powers will legitimately attempt to influence the international system in their interest. It is also to be expected that other powers may resist this attempt to re-distribute power. As power recedes in some areas, other actors may seek to fill that void and, while this may not be of key importance to all, it may be to Australia. Any such interplay could see competition tip into

conflict—and not necessarily between great powers. Balancing, both internally and externally, is designed to deter conflict or, if necessary, defeat an adversary.

Australia has a broad range of security capabilities that can be employed to defend Australian territory and its national interests. Over the past decade and a half, successive Australian governments have invested in enhanced military, police and intelligence capabilities. As a country with a small population, Australia seeks to have a technological edge over most other militaries in the region. However, Australia will need to keep regularly investing to maintain this capability edge.<sup>39</sup> Australia has deployed the ADF and police into its immediate region a number of times of the past 15 years to stabilise and build order to good effect. Consequently, Australia's immediate region is more stable than many. However, as Peter Jennings has reiterated, instability can emanate far from one's own shores.<sup>40</sup>

Australia has been deepening its relationship with its major security partner, the US, and also other allies of the US.<sup>41</sup> Intelligence arrangements, an emphasis on interoperability, exercises and operational deployments in the Middle East, as well as basing arrangements under the US 'pivot', all ensure a close relationship and contribute to US engagement in the region. As asserted by Andrew Shearer, Australia's close relationship with the US advances Australian strategic interests and balances against growing strategic uncertainty.<sup>42</sup>

Of course, China has legitimate and growing interests in the Indo-Pacific region. These interests and expanding engagement do not mean that China wishes to fundamentally change the current tenets of the world order. Indeed, China has been at pains to declare its aim of peaceful development, which is reassuring. Moreover, this question may not even be relevant if China's growth plateaus and the US economy picks up, as is currently forecast. And while there is strategic competition between the US and China, there is also much cooperation and a high degree of economic interdependence. Australia is managing its relationship with each of them well and must continue to do so.

In summary, this proposed grand strategy for Australia seeks to ensure that the fundamental principles of the current world order—rules-based, stable and an open market—endure as power shifts towards Asia in the international system. It would achieve this by building domestic capacity, strengthening regional and broader relationships and, lastly, preparing to act directly when key Australian national interests are impacted or threatened.

## Setting the course

The world is at an inflection point. China is rising, Russia is re-asserting itself, and the schism between Sunni and Shiite is widening. The future of the US is uncertain as it emerges from multiple crises. The balance of power in the existing world order is shifting. At the same time, the world economy is struggling and democracies are experiencing difficult governance circumstances. However, it is not yet clear how far the balance is shifting and what the consequences will be for the current rules-based, stable and open free trade order. In the words of President Obama:

The central question of the global age is whether nations [have] moved forward in a spirit of mutual interest of respect, or descended into the destructive rivalries of the past.<sup>43</sup>

This article has argued that this period of 'radical uncertainty', as termed by Drezner,<sup>44</sup> calls for a formal Australian grand strategy. It has argued that Australia, as a middle power, needs a new strategy to navigate the current and future domestic and international environment. Such a grand strategy must harness all the elements of national power, the 'means', in a sustainable and cogent 'way' to achieve its desired 'ends'. The current reactive and hedging approach will not adequately navigate Australia through the coming challenges.

The key tenet of the proposed grand strategy is 'for Australia to be domestically strong and to seek and support a stable international system based on the rule of law and an open and free economic trading system', based on a three-pronged strategy 'to build, bridge and balance'.

This article has argued that the government must engage the people of Australia with a convincing narrative detailing the complex, fragile and uncertain global environment. The narrative needs to include the rationale for a revised national approach and what it means for all Australians, detailing the

challenges, the tools and the way forward, to ensure that Australia navigates these changing circumstances as effectively as possible.

To build national capacity, the Federal Parliament must find ways to better cooperate and improve governance. There is a desperate need for economic reform to address the structural deficit and increase productivity. Social cohesion must be supported by targeted policies to prevent the further alienation and radicalisation of young Australians.

Australia must also 'bridge' with like-minded countries to mutual benefit. Collective effort, either on a bilateral or multilateral basis, must be sustained or strengthened to address common issues. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade should be better resourced to facilitate the best use of diplomatic and economic power. A strategic partnership with Indonesia should be pursued quickly to the benefit of both countries. Australia must also support free trade and economic arrangements that will stimulate economic growth and improve security. While these 'bridging' actions should primarily be focused on the region, Australia should also continue to proactively support global forums and multilateral initiatives which complement Australia's national interests.

Finally, the article has argued that Australia must be able to 'balance' when the key tenets of the current international system are threatened. It is crucial that the Australian Government continues to invest in military, police and intelligence capabilities—and is prepared to use them as the national interest requires. Australia's relationship with the US must be maintained and its relationship with China strengthened.

The future is more uncertain than it has been for a generation. Australia needs to realise that the current tenets of the world order may not endure and that the alternative would likely be inimical to Australia's interests. Australia must chart a careful course through these changing times. A formal grand strategy in the form of a White Paper will provide the plan needed to navigate this course. In this way, Australia can adjust to the changing domestic and geostrategic circumstances, support the maintenance of the key attributes of the current world order, and be secure and prosperous into the future.

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## NOTES

- 1 This is an abridged version of a paper with the same title, developed by the author while attending the Defence and Strategic Studies Course at the Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies (CDSS) at the Australian Defence College in 2014. The full paper is being published by CDSS as an Indo-Pacific Strategic Paper, and will shortly be available on the Australian Defence College publications website <<http://www.defence.gov.au/ADC/Publications.asp#IndoPacific>>
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# Formulating the 2015 Defence White Paper <sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

Defence White Papers (DWPs) are unclassified assessments of Australia's position in the world and, as a consequence, influence the posture and conception of the ADF. Due to their public nature, the documents are often the depictions of the world that the government-of-the-day wishes to project. Stephan Frühling argues that this is natural, as DWPs converse on 'the use of force, [the] preparation for it and strategic commitments to allies and friends', which are all issues that are 'inherently political'.<sup>2</sup>

Peter Jennings goes further, noting DWPs also 'carry the personal hopes of ministers and the political aspirations of the governments which sponsor them'.<sup>3</sup> However, as Allan Behm suggests, not only do DWPs act as a political justification for the cost of the defence budget but they broadcast the 'what and why' of national defence planning and influence the geostrategic picture.<sup>4</sup>

This article argues that, divorced of politics, the strategic assessments in the 2009 and 2013 DWPs are a continuation of the same narrative, which should continue to be developed in the 2015 paper. This will be analysed through three key strategic environmental elements in the 2009 and 2013 papers: the US, China and the Indo-Pacific concept. Similarities and differences within the 2009 and 2013 papers will be discussed, before reflecting on the utility of these assessments for the upcoming 2015 DWP.

## The US alliance

The 2009 DWP was developed in the midst of a global recession.<sup>5</sup> The US had been tested and stretched in Iraq and Afghanistan. Incoming President Barack Obama declared at his inauguration that America's 'power grows through its prudent use', with security emanating from 'tempering qualities of humility and restraint'.<sup>6</sup> The DWP, titled *Defending Australia in the Asia-Pacific Century: Force 2030*, illustrated the importance of the alliance, observing that the US was likely to remain the 'most powerful and influential strategic actor'.<sup>7</sup> However, it also sent mixed messages.

After the paper's release, Rod Lyon and Andrew Davies urged that Washington be reassured on Australia's commitment to the ANZUS treaty.<sup>8</sup> Because of the paper's overtures on self-reliance, they expressed concern that the Rudd Government did not expect US assistance if Australia were attacked by a minor power, a sentiment seemingly laced throughout the White Paper.

Reflecting on the years preceding 2009, the paper warned that the US might find itself 'preoccupied and stretched', thus its ability to 'shift attention and power project' in a region such as Australia's was 'constrained'.<sup>9</sup> In terms of defining Australia's military goals, the paper asserted that Australia wished to 'act independently', as it would 'not wish to be reliant' on the forces of another power; further, *Force 2030* argued for an ADF capability to lead military coalitions 'in part to compensate for the limited capacity or engagement of others'.<sup>10</sup>

The proposal to upgrade military hardware was justified from a sober assessment of Washington's 'capacity and willingness to continue to play a stabilising role in the region'.<sup>11</sup> The DWP also indicated that while the US might be more reliant on its partners in the future—therefore justifying an expansion of Australia's military—the alliance had changed by the very nature of China's rise, regardless of other underlying factors. Hugh White agreed, noting that the US alliance would be a 'declining strategic asset' as its leadership in the Asia-Pacific would be either 'weaker, diluted, contested or abandoned'.<sup>12</sup>

The 2013 DWP used much more placatory language regarding the US but it was written in a different strategic circumstance, at a time when Prime Minister Gillard found herself presiding over a large budget deficit.<sup>13</sup> Perhaps more influential, however, was the 2011 speech President Obama gave in the Australian Parliament, saying:

As President, I have, therefore, made a deliberate and strategic decision—as a Pacific nation, the United States will play a larger and long-term role in shaping this region and its future, by upholding core principles and in close partnership with our allies and friends.<sup>14</sup>

Defence Minister Stephen Smith explained in the foreword of the austere titled *Defence White Paper 2013* that Obama's 'rebalance' towards the region had been a major factor in the paper's conclusions.<sup>15</sup> He also rationalised the shift of policy based on 'substantially enhanced practical cooperation with the United States'.<sup>16</sup> The Gillard Government stressed Australia's interest in the US being active and engaged in the region but also sought 'reassurances from Washington about its ongoing commitment to underwrite regional security'.<sup>17</sup> Further, the 2013 document significantly departed from its predecessor in revealing that while Australia's defence policy was based on the 'principle of self-reliance', that needed to be seen within 'the context of our Alliance with the United States' and partners.<sup>18</sup>

One might be persuaded that the 2009 paper's treatment of the alliance was an aberration, while the 2013 iteration was a natural transition back to sober ground. This would be a misreading of the situation. Rudd was no isolationist and certainly not anti-American.<sup>19</sup> He was knowledgeable in American politics and used the 2009 DWP as a device to encourage the US to take heed of the Chinese threat and to secure its engagement in Australia's region.

Rudd reportedly told US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in 2009 that his plan for an 'Asia-Pacific community' was to curb China's power and ensure its rise did not result in 'an Asia without the US'.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps the independent streak in *Force 2030* drove home that desire. Weeks before President Obama's 2011 address in Canberra, Clinton noted that America's alliances with regional partners, including Australia, were 'the fulcrum for our strategic turn to the Asia-Pacific'.<sup>21</sup> Thus the 2009 DWP manoeuvred around Hugh White's concerns of American irrelevancy to ensure a strategic victory for Australia which was revealed on the pages of the 2013 edition.

Herein lies the challenge for the treatment of the US in the 2015 DWP. Both 2009 and 2013 were correct in their assessments but for different reasons. While Rudd may have used concepts of independence and self-reliance as a *raison d'être* for enhanced ADF capability, it is this enhanced capability that makes the US more willing to partner with Australia in the region.

The irony of the situation is that in no uncertain terms can Australia hope to defend itself without its major ally—but an over-reliance on American assistance can be seen in a negative light as Australia not sharing the strategic burden.<sup>22</sup> To balance the expectations of the US and the Australian taxpayer, the 2015 paper should be frank on the ADF's ability to defend the country. This will explain how the US alliance is the 'opportunity cost' of much larger expenditure—and, therefore, what a high-yielding dividend Australia achieves for its proposed 2 per cent of GDP funding on defence.

However, even this may not be enough to keep the US focused in the region. Obama signalled in 2012 that after the Afghanistan mission wound down, America's priority would be to focus on 'nation building' at home, asking the Congress to pay down debt and reinvest in America.<sup>23</sup> Most ominous perhaps was Obama's major foreign policy address at West Point in May 2014, when he noted America would only fight for its core interests, such as the security of allies, but failed to mention any of Asia's security challenges.<sup>24</sup> The 2015 DWP needs to articulate the requirement for US forces to remain rebalanced to the region.<sup>25</sup>

## The depiction of China

Far more controversial than the status of the alliance was the depiction of China in *Force 2030*. The 2009 paper gave particular distinction to the 'The Strategic Implications of the Rise of China', apportioning the People's Republic of China a separate sub-chapter.<sup>26</sup> While only two years earlier China had surpassed Japan as Australia's largest trading partner, the DWP pulled no punches in relegating the economic relationship to second place, stating that 'economic interdependence will not preclude inter-state or conflicts or tensions short of war'.<sup>27</sup>

The strategic justification for this statement can be found in the 'Rise of China' section and, in many ways, this is the most revealing passage concerning Australia's new strategic paradigm, wherein:

China will also be the strongest Asian military power, by a considerable margin. Its military modernisation will be increasingly characterised by the development of power projection capabilities... [T]he pace, scope and structure of China's military modernisation have the potential to give its neighbours cause for concern if not carefully explained.<sup>28</sup>

In a relatively-benign external threat environment, the reasoning for China building and modernising the People's Liberation Army had challenged security analysts. The Chinese military budget had seen double-digit percentage increases for almost all of the 30 years prior to *Force 2030* and, compounding this, the estimated gap between reported and actual military spending had grown to 72 per cent.<sup>29</sup>

This pointed to Chinese aspirations and ambitions of becoming a 'great power' in order to 'secure its global interests and trade routes', as well as having the forces to 'provide muscle behind its diplomacy'.<sup>30</sup> These interests were seen to be expanding, evidenced in March 2009 when the USNS *Impeccable* was subjected to 'reckless and dangerous manoeuvres' by five Chinese vessels in the South China Sea, as China began to make assertions that its 'nine-dash-line' claim to that area was not subject to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.<sup>31</sup>

The need for trepidation was clear. However, the problem with *Force 2030* was seen to be one of language and diplomatic tact—on one hand pointing to China's ambitious rise and, on the other, justifying a new suite of ADF capability. However, Rudd's influence on the paper had a much more decisive influence than the mooted 'victory for Canberra hawks'.<sup>32</sup>

In an address filled with Chinese cultural nuance, he explained to students at Beijing University that China's rise was having 'a great impact not just on China but also on the world', before indicating that while Australia was a friend, it was an honest friend.<sup>33</sup> He described Australia as a *zhengyou*, a friend who 'offers unflinching advice and counsels restraint'.<sup>34</sup> In the absence of a foreign policy white paper, *Force 2030* was the vehicle to announce a change in Australia's strategic thinking.

While it would be simpler to view the 2013 paper's more measured treatment of China as a reflection of Prime Minister Gillard's foreign policy inexperience—and a movement away from the Rudd legacy—the truth of the matter is far different.<sup>35</sup> The 2013 DWP was influenced by a measured whole-of-government policy process, through the precursor National Security Strategy and Asian Century White Paper.

The underlying message of the DWP did not change regarding China but the bureaucracy used the interceding four years to wordsmith the message, with the 2013 formulation that 'Australia welcomes China's rise' and 'does not approach China as an adversary', while seeing China's military modernisation as 'a natural and legitimate outcome of its economic growth'.<sup>36</sup> However, as Brendan Taylor asserts, despite the 'softer tone' there remained a 'sting in the tail' towards China beneath the surface of the text.<sup>37</sup>

Symbolically, the China and US sections of the paper were combined. In a more conciliatory tone, the 2013 paper argued that while rivalry was inevitable between the US and China, both major powers sought 'stability and prosperity, not conflict'.<sup>38</sup> This aligned with the January 2013 National Security Strategy which noted Beijing and Washington's 'clear economic interests in preserving the security and stability of the region'.<sup>39</sup>

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C), which had ownership of the National Security Strategy, was also responsible for the delivery of the *Australia in the Asian Century White Paper* a year before. A distinctly diplomatic document, it stated that 'Australia's alliance with the United States and a strong US presence in Asia will support regional stability, as will China's full participation in regional developments'.<sup>40</sup> It further asserted that Australia aimed to promote 'cooperative arrangements among the major powers in the region while keeping a 'comprehensive approach to security', noting the DWP would take its lead from PM&C's guidance.<sup>41</sup>

While the underlying narrative of the 2009 and 2013 DWPs is consistent on China, the 2015 paper might find it difficult to keep a diplomatic tone. The 2013 paper directed the ADF to focus on strengthening defence ties within the region. However, in doing this through bilateral means, Australia may be seen to be either aligning itself with a particular country's position or having no position by being a 'man for all seasons'.

Countries to Australia's north confront a much more dire situation regarding China's assertiveness and, by aligning with states such as Vietnam and The Philippines, the 2013 paper's tone on China may appear disingenuous. Similarly, in signing a defence technology transfer agreement with Japan, at the same time that Prime Minister Abe announced a reinterpretation of Japan's peace-time constitution, could cast doubt on Australia's impartiality in growing tensions in the East China Sea.<sup>42</sup> The only way in which the 2015 DWP can reconcile these positions is to actively pursue a bilateral defence relationship with China or advocate for a regional multilateral security framework that brings all actors to the same table.<sup>43</sup>

## The Indo-Pacific concept

While the intricacies in Australia's relationships with its most important partners were centre stage in 2009 and 2013, arguably the most important feature of the DWPs was the attempt to reconstruct the region's geopolitical architecture. The evolution from an emphasis on the Asia-Pacific to the trans-oceanic Indo-Pacific reflected a growing confidence within Australian strategic thought. In this regard, we should see the entrance of the Indo-Pacific construct in the 2013 paper as not a rejection of previous policy but a natural extension.

Australia has long had an 'order-building approach' to its regional engagement.<sup>44</sup> As Labor Prime Ministers, Rudd and Gillard were acutely aware of Hawke's legacy in founding the APEC forum in 1989. Asian engagement, the third pillar of Labor's foreign policy platform, was a central focus when Rudd launched the 'Asia-Pacific Community' proposal in 2004.<sup>45</sup> This concept would build on perceived deficiencies in the existing regional architecture, whereby ASEAN and ASEAN Plus Three focused on Southeast and East Asia; the East Asia Summit included India, Australia and New Zealand but not the US; and APEC included the major Asia-Pacific economies but not India.<sup>46</sup>

Rudd stated that the region had something to learn from the European experience, and advocated for an Asia-Pacific Community that enhanced a sense of regional security.<sup>47</sup> Dismissing the complexities of security architecture in the region, the 2009 DWP explained that this approach was directly related to 'enhancing strategic stability' by embracing the US, Japan, China, India and Indonesia in a 'regional security architecture'.<sup>48</sup>

Identifying India as a strategic counter-weight to China was significant, especially with lingering doubts about America's true intentions. *Force 2030* indicated a shift to a new strategic concept when espousing that 'the Indian Ocean will join the Pacific Ocean in terms of its centrality to [Australia's] maritime strategy and defence planning'.<sup>49</sup> Jack McCaffrie and Chris Rahman suggest that far from promoting an 'Asia-Pacific century', *Force 2030* elevated 'the importance of the Indian Ocean in Australia's strategic thinking'.<sup>50</sup>

While the *Asian Century* paper had mentioned the Indo-Pacific concept, by the time of the 2013 DWP it was a headline act. Hailing from West Australia, then Defence Minister Stephen Smith suggested that the Indo-Pacific had emerged as the 'world's strategic centre of gravity', as it was 'home to three of the world's superpowers—the United States, China and India'.<sup>51</sup> Rory Medcalf and James Brown point out that Australia was the first country to use the Indo-Pacific term, and the 2013 paper itself concedes that the system was still 'emerging' from an 'unsurprisingly... series of sub-regions and arrangements rather than a unitary whole'.<sup>52</sup>

While unquestionably the concept is one that is applicable to Australia's geostrategic circumstance, for the major powers the argument was less convincing. Beijing, always suspicious of India, was less than enamoured with a concept that makes India the default power in the Indian Ocean, making strange bedfellows with America which had no 'core interest' in the Indian Ocean.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, while Australia might look to build on the 2009 'Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation', India might be 'less willing', as its policy of 'ambiguity and equivocality' has served it well to this point.<sup>54</sup> But this analysis oversimplifies the issue.

China also views itself as an Indian Ocean power, as evidenced by its so-called 'string of pearls' policy and recent exercises in the ocean accessed via Australia's northern approaches.<sup>55</sup> The communique from the 2014 Australia-US Ministerial (AUSMIN) meeting noted the alliance as a demonstration of 'the United States' strong commitment to the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean', which included harnessing opportunities for greater defence cooperation in the region.<sup>56</sup> India too is becoming more strategically assertive at a

time when Australia is seeking to develop links with it. Prime Minister Modi has articulated a case for a more self-confident India within the region.<sup>57</sup>

In 2015, with an influential Western Australian as Foreign Minister, the Government is unlikely to be opposed to the Indo-Pacific concept, nor has the strategic environment altered to warrant foregoing the term. In March 2014, then Defence Minister Senator Johnston told an Indonesian audience that ‘for Western Australians, an Indo-Pacific orientation flows in our blood’.<sup>58</sup> However, the issue of the Indo-Pacific is not one of geopolitics or strategy but rather one of domestic economics.

Peter Jennings—who chairs the 2015 DWP expert panel—agreed, noting that previous papers had issues with fiscal imbalance not strategy.<sup>59</sup> While the current government has consistently maintained that the 2015 paper would be costed, Paul Dibb and Richard Brabin-Smith suggest that the only option for reducing the distance between budget and strategic ambition is to reduce preparedness and modernisation.<sup>60</sup>

But this is not the only option. For the 2015 DWP, there must be not only a reconciliation between budget and force structure but an indication of Australia’s political will to build and invest in the new Indo-Pacific model in the interests of regional security. The paper must articulate the role Australia has in developing the Indo-Pacific architecture—and whether the Government sees the system as a framework for a broader Asia-Pacific community or as simply a caricature of where Australia sees itself in the world. The Government must fund the Indo-Pacific policy, which includes force structuring the ADF in a way that allows it to be influential across the strategic arc.

## Conclusion

While it might be enticing to characterise the next DWP as a policy rebuke of former governments, this would be a mistake. Far from being an articulation of political aspiration, the 2015 DWP should be a continuation of the same strategic narrative that has developed from 2009 through 2013. The paper should enunciate to the taxpayer why Australia needs the US alliance and, in parallel, frame a strategic environment that leaves the Americans in no doubt about the importance of the rebalance.

With regards to China, overcoming the political imperative for non-offence, the paper must reconcile the regional defence engagement strategy with the posturing of many Asian nations against China’s assertiveness. If the Government truly wishes to not partake in a zero-sum game against China’s rise, it must work towards bringing China into its regional defence diplomacy and developing workable security mechanisms. Finally, the DWP must clarify what the Indo-Pacific concept means in a strategic sense and link this to ADF capability and budget. The paper must also define Australia’s role within this architecture.

The success of the 2015 paper should be adjudicated on an honest and frank assessment of the strategic environment that links to an appropriate force structure. Simply fitting a strategic picture and capability suite to a tidy figure of 2 per cent of GDP does Australia no favours.

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## DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this article are the author’s, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Defence, or the Australian Government more broadly.

## NOTES

- 1 This is an edited version of a paper titled 'An essay comparing the strategic assessments of Australia's environment contained in the 2009 and 2013 Defence White Papers, with recommendations on which of these should guide the 2015 paper', submitted by the author while attending the Australian Command and Staff Course at the Australian Command and Staff College at the Australian Defence College in 2014.
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# **‘There is nothing new under the sun’: an early Australian coalition operation, South Africa, 1900**

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## **Introduction**

From May to September 1900, a large proportion of Australian colonial troops serving in South Africa in the ongoing war against the Boers did so as part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Mounted Brigade during Lord Roberts’ march to Pretoria. The successful conclusion of this large-scale offensive marked the end of ‘conventional’ operations on the veldt and the beginning of the ‘guerrilla’ phase of the war. The operational experiences of this brigade have not figured largely in the history of Australia’s involvement in this war.

Yet they are important, not least because the brigade itself was composed of not only Australians but Canadians, New Zealanders and British regulars. It was in many ways a microcosm of imperial military cooperation—a ‘multinational coalition’, to use contemporary parlance, writ small. Like all such groupings of various ‘national’ contingents brought together for an operational purpose (then as now), the importance of international (in this case intra-imperial) politics, the appearances of unity at the front and at home, and the intricacies of cooperation between very different, yet interoperable forces in an expeditionary role were all borne out on the veldt more than a century ago.

The aim of this article is not to provide a forensic analysis of such issues but rather to offer some historical context. Contemporary discussion of such factors within Army, the ADF and the wider community may loom large but, as always, it is worth bearing in mind that ‘there is nothing new under the sun’.<sup>1</sup>

## **The raising of the 1<sup>st</sup> Mounted Infantry Brigade**

After a very brief command of a British militia brigade stationed at Kimberly, on 30 March 1900 Major General Edward Hutton received a telegram that he was needed in Bloemfontein immediately. Hutton was an officer of wide colonial experience. He had previously commanded the military forces of NSW (1893-96), acted as the General Officer Commanding the Canadian militia (1898-1900) and was destined to become the inaugural commander of the first post-Federation Australian Army.

Hutton reached his destination on the morning of 1 April, just as news of the mauling of the British 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Brigade at Sanna’s Post was received. Initially, he could find no one to tell him why he had been summoned. Not even Kitchener could enlighten him, although an appointment was set for 10am the next morning. Hutton could hardly contain himself, convinced he was to receive command of a newly-raised division of Canadian, Australian and New Zealand volunteers as befitted his colonial expertise.

He was, however, offered command not of the new division, which was given to Major General Ian Hamilton, but rather one of its two brigades. If Hutton was initially disappointed, it did not last long, writing home to his wife that his new command was ‘really a division and numbers between 5 and 6000 men’, and that it ‘realises my dream of the last 10 years’.

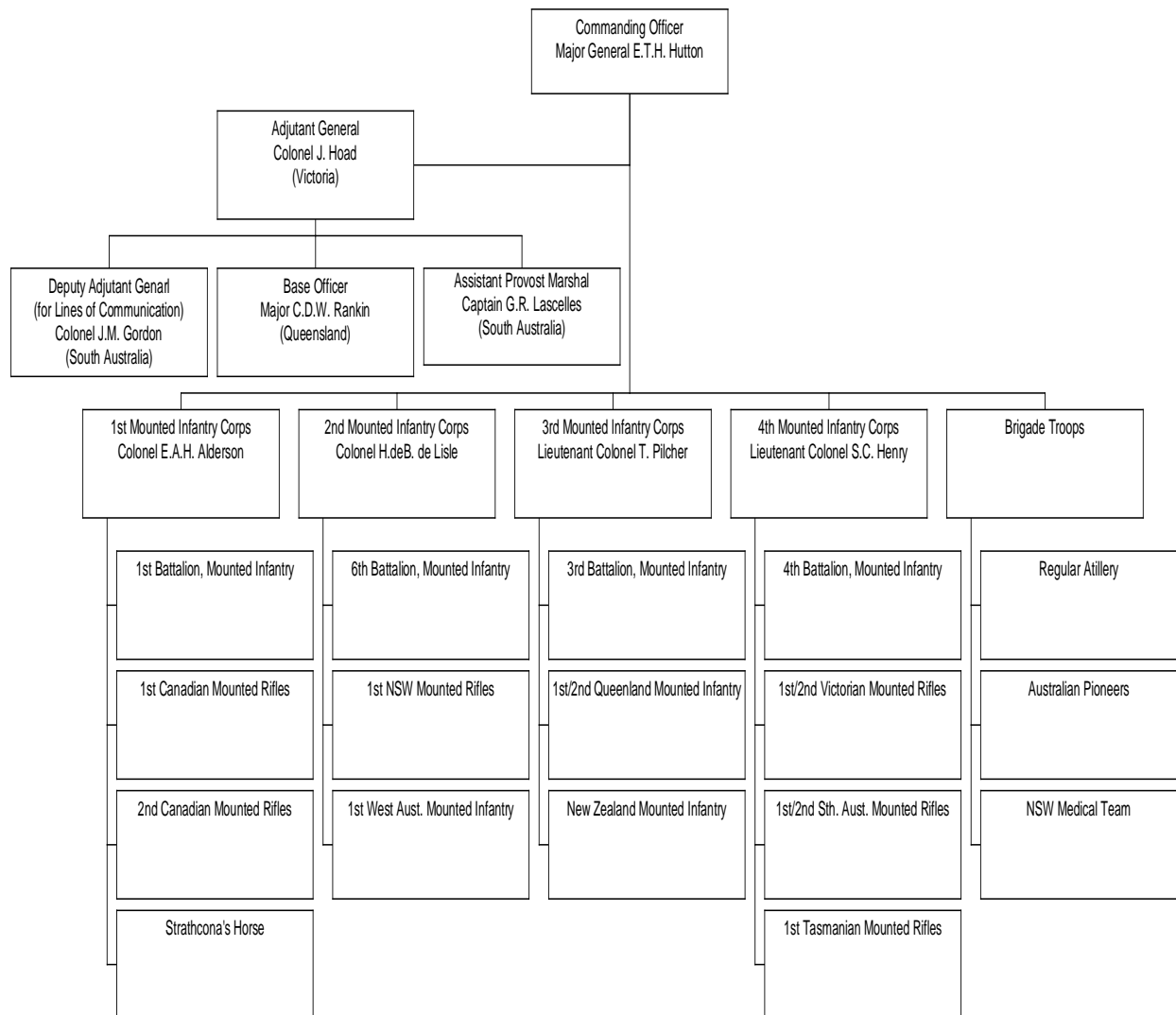
Hutton was further thrilled that the commanding officers within his brigade were all men who had served with him as mounted infantrymen in earlier campaigns or at the mounted infantry school at Aldershot he had established in 1888. ‘There is no doubt that when the advance of the Army takes place’, he mused to his friend Lord Minto, Governor-General in Canada, ‘much must depend upon the work which the M.I. [Mounted Infantry] Division are able to accomplish’.

Hutton’s 1<sup>st</sup> Mounted Infantry Brigade, of the 1<sup>st</sup> Mounted Infantry Division, was raised officially on 7 April 1900 and organised into four mounted ‘corps’, each made up of two or three Australian, Canadian or New Zealand mounted units, with the addition of a regular British mounted infantry battalion. The brigade also contained its own medical support and pioneer troops to be used to find water on the march,

cut or repair railways, and to prepare fords over rivers. A small detachment of scouts was also soon added to the formation.

Hutton set to organising his brigade with gusto, in the process taking the unusual step of using colonials as staff officers on his headquarters. Although these men clearly lacked experience and training compared to the British regulars he selected to command the fighting corps, Hutton was personally familiar with their strengths and weaknesses, telling his wife that she ‘will smile when you read the names of the staff ... and find you know nearly all of them’.

**Figure 1. The 1st Mounted Infantry Brigade, as initially formed, April 1900**



From the first, Hutton was well aware of the professional and political significance of commanding a composite, imperial formation of mounted infantrymen. Already concerned with British military ineffectiveness and imperial defence arrangements more generally, here was an opportunity to test the potential of intra-imperial military cooperation at an operational and tactical level. This was a force born of the Empire, deployed far from home, for the purpose of defending the greater whole. ‘I must make my command a success under Providence’, he wrote home, describing his responsibilities as ‘quite as much political and Imperial, as it is military’.

To Joseph Chamberlain, Colonial Secretary in London, Hutton mused, ‘this happy association of selected representatives from the self-governing Colonies ... will exercise no small effect upon the future military consolidation of the defences of the Empire’. He predicted to Minto ‘the success which it achieves will to a very great extent depend on the feeling of the Australian and Canadian Troops and through them the

Colonies whom they represent towards a Military Co-operative system of Defence for the Empire'. Hutton was also cognisant of the domestic political ramifications of his formation. He made certain to write, for example, to the Australian Premiers, and to Wilfrid Laurier in Canada and Richard Seddon in New Zealand, to let them know how relieved they ought to feel that one such as he, with a wealth of colonial empathy and experience, commanded their troops.

## The advance to Pretoria

By late April, Lord Roberts' long-expected march to Pretoria was almost ready. The overall strategy for the British advance was reasonably straightforward. Opposing the obvious and imminent British operation, the 3000 Boers in the area, under General Jacobus Herculaas (Koos) de la Rey, were expected to defend at the Vet, the Sand and the Vaal Rivers where they crossed the railway line linking Bloemfontein with Pretoria. The basic British plan was for mounted elements, such as Hutton's brigade, to flank these positions and cut the Boer line of retreat so they might be crushed by Roberts' advancing infantry.

Hutton began his advance to the initial objective of the town of Brandford early on 3 May and, from the outset, was forced to fight forward against 'somewhat stiff' resistance offered by Boer skirmishers and delaying positions. Nonetheless, by 12.30pm, with his brigade stretched to the northwest, Hutton was able to order his reserve into the town, which was occupied without resistance. By this time, the Boers were withdrawing, thanks to British infantrymen having broken a determined resistance to the northeast.

By late afternoon, Hutton found himself six-and-a-half kilometres east of Brandford, on the main line of Boer retreat, on a ridge parallel to the Bradford-Ladybrand Road. At that point, with only 250 New South Welshmen close at hand, he was unable to prevent 'the rear guard of the enemy passing out of sight, wagons and all'. Nonetheless, in its first operation and after losing only nine wounded and after 12 straight hours in the saddle and under intermittent fire, the 1<sup>st</sup> Mounted Brigade had done well.

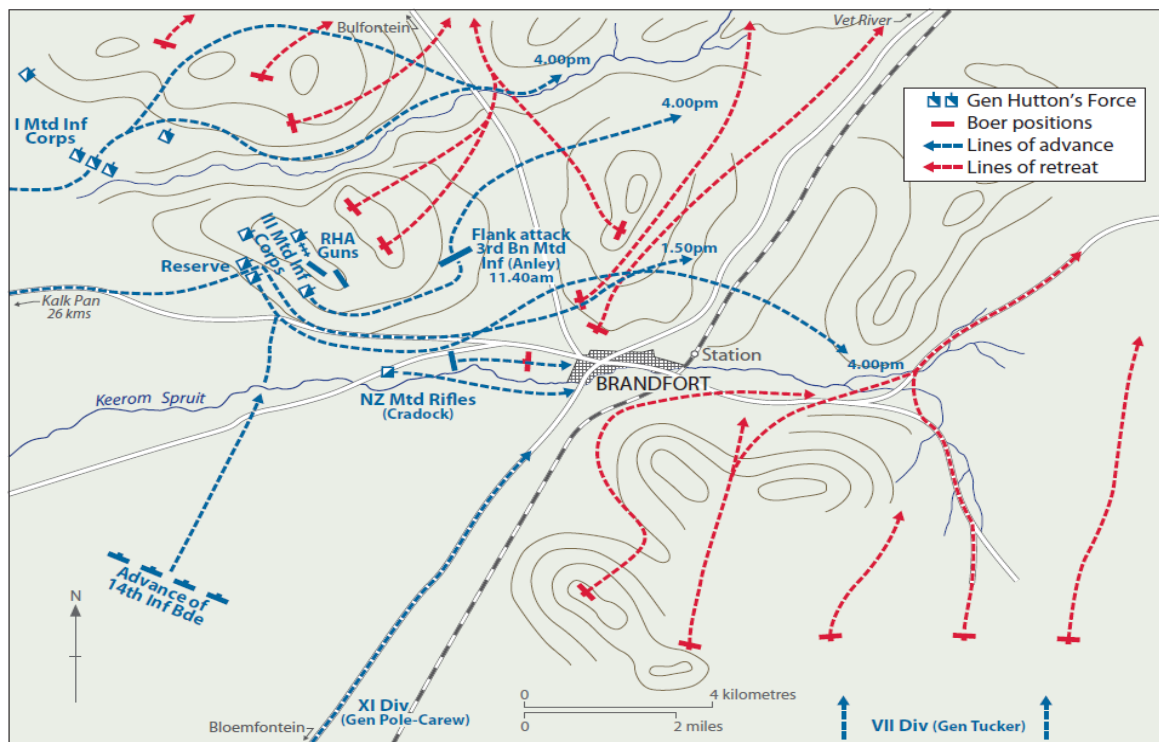
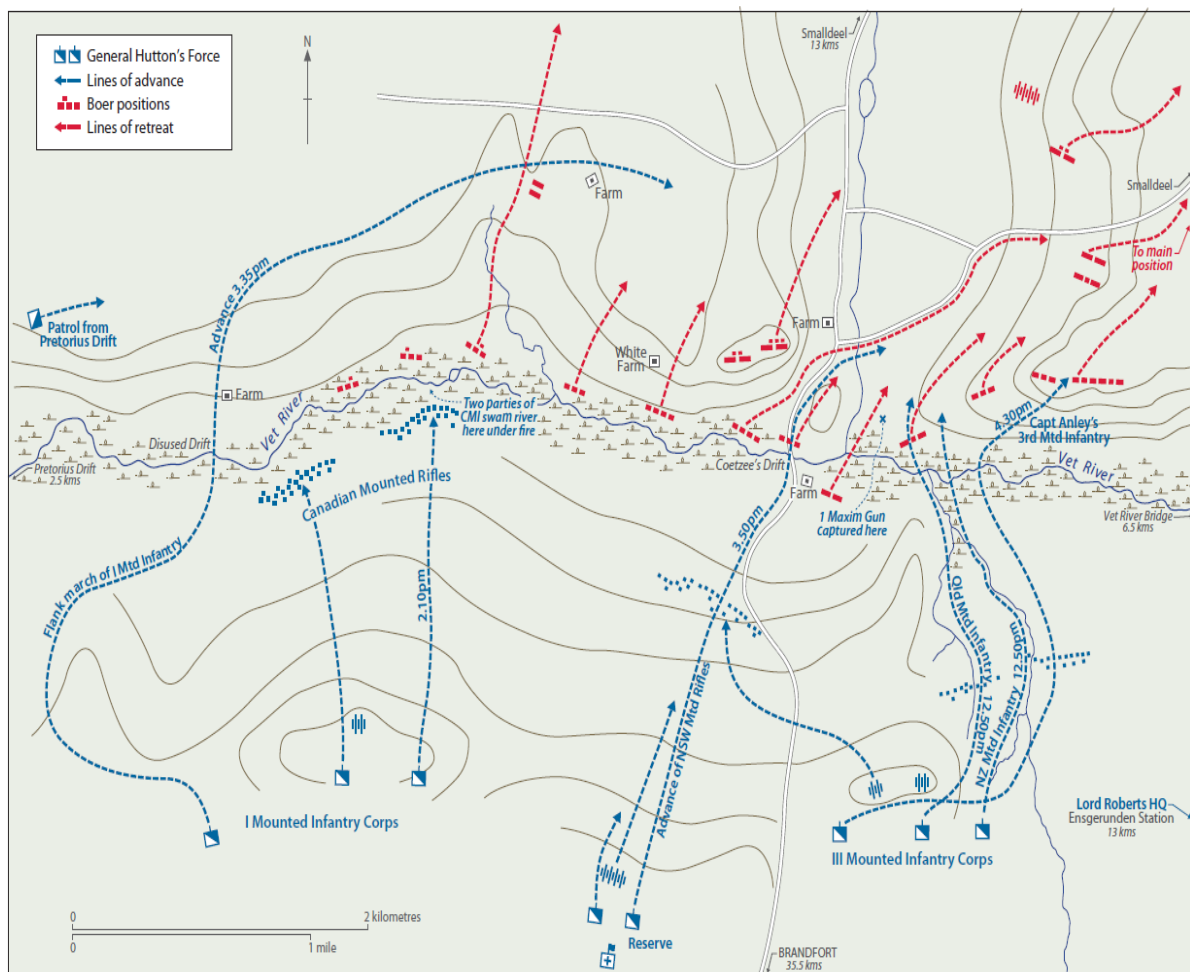


Figure 2: Hutton's force at Brandford, 2 May 1900

The next morning, the brigade began moving off towards the Vet River. After advancing around 13 kilometres, Hutton came upon 1200-2000 Boer troops, with guns, entrenched on hills to his front. With characteristic aggression he attacked, sending one corps to flank the defenders to the left while another pressed the centre of the Boer line. In short order, the New Zealanders took the centre kopje of the Boer position under heavy fire. The defenders retired to the Vet, while Hutton consolidated his position. The Boers were clearly intending to hold the river, and Hutton knew his next orders would be to shift them.

On the morning of 5 May, Hutton met with Kitchener and Roberts to discuss the upcoming move against the Boer position on the Vet. By now, having learned the tactical lessons of the veldt, open formations and flanking manoeuvres would remain the British pattern of advance. Hutton was thus ordered to turn the Boer flank well to the west, while Roberts' main attack was pushed through near the Vet River Station. Hutton's brigade was at this point reduced to 2250 men—1500 short of its paper strength—with the best part of two of his corps detached.

Hutton's force departed for Coetzee's Drift, eight kilometres to the west, with a detachment of Canadians sent 15 kilometres further west to an alternate drift, should it be needed to cross the river. Around lunchtime, his scouts contacted the Boers entrenched in low, prickly acacia scrub on both sides of the river in the vicinity of Coetzee's Drift. Hutton faced a problem. The drift was the obvious place to cross the river but it was well guarded by defenders entrenched on the steep northern banks and among hills strewn with boulders. Boer long-range artillery was soon falling on Hutton's position. A frontal attack would be costly.



**Figure 3: The 1<sup>st</sup> Mounted Infantry brigade at Coetzee's Drift, 5 May 1900**

Fortunately for Hutton, at that moment a local farmer appeared and offered—for a 'pardon and free pass'—to guide a force across a previously-unknown drift only five kilometres to the west. Hutton ordered the Boer front be pressured by the Canadians to the left and Queenslanders on the right, while at

2.00pm, with the defenders distracted, he ordered the British regulars of the 1<sup>st</sup> Mounted Infantry Battalion across the new drift. Now Hutton directed his reserve, the New South Wales Mounted Rifles, to make a frontal attack to fix the defenders in place until they could be encircled. 'As we proceeded', recalled one of the New South Welshmen, 'little puffs of dust thrown up by the bullets could be seen all around us'.

When the New South Welshmen got near the wooded bank, they fixed bayonets and charged across the river bank and up other side. The Boers had had enough and galloped out of the river bed. By nightfall, the brigade was secure on the north bank of the Vet, with outposts overlooking Roberts' main advance. Major Henry George 'Harry' Chauvel of the Queensland Mounted Infantry described the battle as 'the prettiest and hottest bit of fighting we have yet seen'. Importantly, news of the brigade's success in battle quickly made its way back to the colonies.

After Coetzee's Drift, Hutton's men set off in pursuit of the Boer rearguard in the vicinity of the Sand River. As the brigade closed on its objective, his leading units found 'the whole Boer Army encamped on the north bank', with the last enemy wagons only just making their crossing. In another characteristically-aggressive move, and hoping to prevent demolition of a nearby bridge, Hutton again sent his New South Welshmen forward and by 4.30pm a serious fire-fight had developed across his front, while long-range Boer artillery shelled his rearward positions.

The Boers then counter-attacked on Hutton's right and re-crossed the river on the left in an effort to outflank his forward line. Despite checking these efforts, Hutton knew his position was precarious. He was 39 kilometres from Roberts' army and outnumbered, with the Boers showing no sign of having been broken. As the sun fell, he withdrew his forward troops. That night Hutton was ordered not to re-engage at the Sand until the British infantry could arrive. He grumbled that 'Roberts is cautious and determined not to run any risk', and claimed that if he had had his full brigade of 6500 men, instead of 2200, more might have been done.

## **Moving into the Transvaal**

During the night of 9 May, Roberts and Kitchener reached Hutton's position and issued orders for the next phase of the advance. Hutton was to link up with Major General John French's Cavalry Division for a wide sweep west of the Sand River to flank and turn Boer positions up to and including the town of Kroonstad. French was to command the new combined mounted force of 4250 men and 18 guns. The subsequent British attack by more than 20,000 troops against around 1000 scattered Boers on the Sand was fought mostly on the eastern wing by Hamilton's column, yet Hutton and French made an important contribution in clearing the prominent kopjes (Dirksburg and Vredes Verdrag) overlooking the railway.

As they approached, General Louis Botha, commanding the Transvaal Boers, dispatched 200 mounted troops to block their progress as he withdrew north along the rail line. During the fighting that followed, Hutton's mounted infantrymen were of great help to the cavalry in clearing the enemy from farms, walls, enclosures and other built-up positions. At one point Hutton, with only a small force of 500 at his immediate disposal, gained the high ground near Vredes Verdrag and could see the whole Boer force withdrawing to the southeast. The Boer line of retreat had been cut but Hutton's small force was insufficient to press the advantage. He once more lamented that with more men he would have 'been able to close with the enemy' and, if further assisted by the cavalry, could have taken considerable numbers of prisoners.

By the morning of 12 May, Hutton's formation was acting as a connection between French's cavalry driving to encircle Kroonstad to the north, and Roberts' infantry advance preparing to move against the town from the south. He expected a general engagement and stubborn fight for the town but was surprised to find 'the bird had fled' and that the Boers had abandoned Kroonstad the night before. Although there was some disappointment in that a decisive battle at Kroonstad might 'have gone a long way to finishing the war', Hutton's increasingly hungry and exhausted men and mounts were happy to rest (aside from the odd farm raid) for the next week in the vicinity of the town. Looting was, by necessity, widespread. 'We cannot get any food supplies', one of Hutton's men complained, 'everything is seized, either for the hospitals, or the ambulances, or the officers'.

Hutton and French received new orders on 19 May, the day Mafeking was at last relieved to much celebration across the Empire, for the next advance to the Vaal River. For this task, he was given the 2400 men of his 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Corps, with French commanding 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Cavalry brigades (1800 men). With French again in charge of the combined force, Hutton was to continue to operate in front of Roberts' main column against the Boer flank and rear.

Two days into the advance, Hutton's scouts discovered that Schoeman's Drift across the Vaal was undefended and he urged French to make a hasty crossing. French, however, chose to adhere to Roberts' instructions. Twenty-four hours later, Hutton's continuing agitation prevailed on French to deviate from his original orders and to march directly northwest for the river. On 22 May, the combined mounted force was drawn up in bivouac on both sides of the Vaal, with outposts clinging to the steep slopes of the surrounding kopjes, 'while the occasional shot from the outposts enlivened the scene'. Transvaal was entered and the imposing Vaal was crossed.

## **The taking of Johannesburg and Pretoria**

A week later, Hutton's brigade moved once more with the cavalry division through the strip of land leading into the Klip River Valley in order to flank Johannesburg from the west, while Roberts' main force approached from the east. Meanwhile, Botha prepared to defend on the surrounding ridges. Boer artillery began to fall and in the ensuing scramble to cross the Klip and clear the ridges, a degree of control and coordination between the cavalymen and mounted infantrymen was lost. By the afternoon, both French and Hutton were under pressure. While they held footholds on the north bank of the river, the Boers had superior numbers and artillery in the ridges overlooking them.

An expected Boer night attack did not eventuate but, from 8.30am the next morning, Hutton's men were pinned by heavy artillery and Vickers-Maxim fire. One soldier later recalled the scene as a 'sea of flowers of smoke, and black desolation'. The mounted infantrymen nonetheless held the Boers' attention while French marched northwest towards Doornkop, where Hamilton had begun a frontal assault on the Boer position. French eventually managed to turn the Boer right flank and Hutton was at last able to extract his men. By nightfall, Hutton's force rejoined French on the Witwatersrand ridge near Roodepoort. It had been a testing time for both Hutton and his brigade.

On 30 May, pressed by Hamilton's column on one side and Roberts on the other, Johannesburg finally fell. A detachment of New South Welshmen from Hutton's brigade was the first to enter the city, and its men were somewhat disappointed by its narrow streets and run-down appearance. Given the rate of illness, wastage of horses and lack of supplies across the British force, the city's newly-secured rail line was, however, a lifeline.

Meanwhile, by this time Hutton's main force had reached the summit of the Witwatersrand range and a 'seemingly endless succession of gold mines and works!!'. From this high point, just west of the Cavalry Division, Hutton could see Boer wagons retreating from Johannesburg towards Pretoria. He immediately ordered his brigade to the valley below and into pursuit. French rode down to meet him, demanding an explanation. Hutton, his blood running hot, replied that he intended to capture the departing wagons, only 7-8 kilometres away.

French was furious that such action would put the mounted infantry in front of the cavalry but, with 'much strong language at the slowness of his brigadiers', agreed to allow Hutton to proceed. Then 'we were all off like shots from a catapult' recalled Hutton, with one mounted infantry corps to the north to cut off the Boer retreat and another directly against the main enemy force. The Boer column was caught and engaged successfully with 12 wagons captured, along with a long-range French-made Creusot gun and 46 prisoners (including a German 'field cornet', Richard August Runck, a key member of a German Commando fighting with the Boers, who had been returning from a meeting in Johannesburg). French, despite the tension, basked in the reflected glory of Hutton's success.

On 3 June, the long, tiring advance towards Pretoria re-commenced with Hutton's brigade, like the rest of the British army, growing ever more weary and short on supplies. One of his men wrote home describing 'stumps of weary men march or ride on some conveyance, ill of wounds or fever, dysentery, sore feet, exhaustion, or other disease'. Hutton did his best to raise their spirits, forming up his command to tell them how proud he was of how they had fought thus far. There is little evidence, however, of much



success in this regard. Nonetheless, by the afternoon on 4 June, the combined cavalry/mounted infantry force had fought its way west and northwest of Pretoria, effectively turning the Boers from Roberts' main advance. The city surrendered that evening.

## Follow-up actions

The fall of the Transvaal capital did not, contrary to the hopes and expectations of many British officers, signal the end of enemy resistance. There remained around 6000 Boers determined to fight on in Transvaal under Lois Botha and Koos de la Rey. Roberts knew these remaining commandos must be destroyed but his troops were in poor shape. Few units could muster even half their strength and the loss of horses had been horrific. Nonetheless, plans were drafted.

Hutton received fresh instructions on 8 June to cooperate once more with the cavalry to turn the right flank and rear of the new Boer position astride the Middleburg-Delagoa Bay railway, while Hamilton marched against the enemy's left flank at Elands River Station. The claws of this pincer would be some 30 kilometres apart. In between them, British infantrymen would head straight for the Boer centre.

Hutton and French marched out on 11 June. Their combined force was a shadow of what it had been—700 exhausted cavalymen and around 900 equally worn-out mounted infantrymen (less than a quarter of those Hutton had set out with from Bloemfontein). With little intelligence or reconnaissance, Hutton followed French across Pienaar's River and entered the Kamelfontein valley. The Boers waited on either side of the cavalry advance and, once French's men were a few kilometres into the valley, they attacked, beginning a series of engagements with Roberts' advancing army along an almost 40-kilometre front.

The Boers were outnumbered but held their ground. On the right-hand side of the British pincer, the attacking troops found themselves pinned down. The situation on the left for French and Hutton, facing up to 2800 troops under de la Rey and General J.P. Snyman, was even more difficult. The cavalymen, caught in a valley, were taking fire from three sides. French ordered a general dismount and they held on in this location for the rest of the day and the next. Hutton tried to relieve the pressure on French but soon found his troops were themselves unable to move without drawing considerable Boer fire.

Although able to check local Boer counter-attacks, both men agreed little could be done until Roberts' main frontal attack was mounted. The cavalry and mounted infantry slept on the ground they held. Gloom set in for many. The next morning, an anticipated Boer attack did not unfold, thanks to a successful British infantry attack against Diamond Hill towards the centre of the Boer line. The Boers withdrew but a policy of caution at General Headquarters meant that the British mounted pursuit did not begin until the next morning, much to Hutton's chagrin. 'The same mistake is made every time of contenting ourselves with turning the Boers out of their position and not rapidly following them up', he fumed to his wife.

Roberts wanted to march east to round up Botha's retreating army and Paul Kruger's government-in-hiding but a raid by de Wet's forces at Roodewal the previous week showed that resistance continued in the Orange Free State. Dealing with the prospect of an emerging guerrilla war, capturing the Boer leaders thus became Roberts' immediate focus. Part of this strategy was the infamous 'scorched earth' policy, designed to intimidate or starve the Boers into submission. Hutton's brigade thus spent the rest of June in the vicinity of Pretoria conducting minor operations against Boer raiders and pillaging Boer farms and livestock. By 22 June, the brigade boasted only 400 horses 'which can even stand up'. 'We are very, very badly off for all necessities', he told his wife, 'and the men are almost in rags, poor fellows!'

The pace quickened once more for Hutton, however, on receiving orders on 2 July to move to Rietfontein to take command not only of his own brigade but 450 mounted troops and two infantry battalions under Brigadier Bryan Mahon, of Mafeking fame. From here, Hutton was to march his expanded command southwards to drive the Boers under Botha away from the railway to Johannesburg, and the country east of it.

At first light on 6 July, Hutton's main force started. He ordered Mahon to clear the country west of the Tigerspoort-Witpoort ridge, while he took up a new position on the Standerton Road only a few kilometres short of a suspected Boer concentration. The next day, Hutton instructed Mahon—with the bulk of the mounted troops—to make an encircling movement against another suspected enemy position at Bronkhorstspuit. During his encirclement, Mahon was ambushed by multiple Boer columns advancing

from the north and northeast. Communications was lost with Hutton and, with artillery falling, Mahon balked. By late evening, his whole mounted force had fallen back to Hutton's position, with the Boers in pursuit.

Encouraged by this success, Botha moved to surround Hutton, yet he hesitated to attack. Meanwhile, an anxious Roberts despatched 1000 cavalrymen under French as reinforcements. By this time, however, the Boer force was thinning, with Botha thinking better of any immediate offensive move. Hutton took the chance to develop his own plans against known enemy positions in the Witpoort-Kafferspruit ridge area, with French, now the local commander, giving him full rein.

On the morning of 11 July, Hutton's attack began and by 1pm his main force was on the ridge south of Witpoort, driving the Boers before it. No sooner had Hutton taken the town, however, than a still nervous Roberts ordered Mahon and a large proportion of Hutton's force back to protect Pretoria. Hutton's remaining 2500 men, entrenched at Tigerspoort Pass, Witpoort Pass, Kafferspruit Pass and Rietvlei, now faced a new Boer line astride the Pretoria-Delagoa railway at Rhenosterfontein.

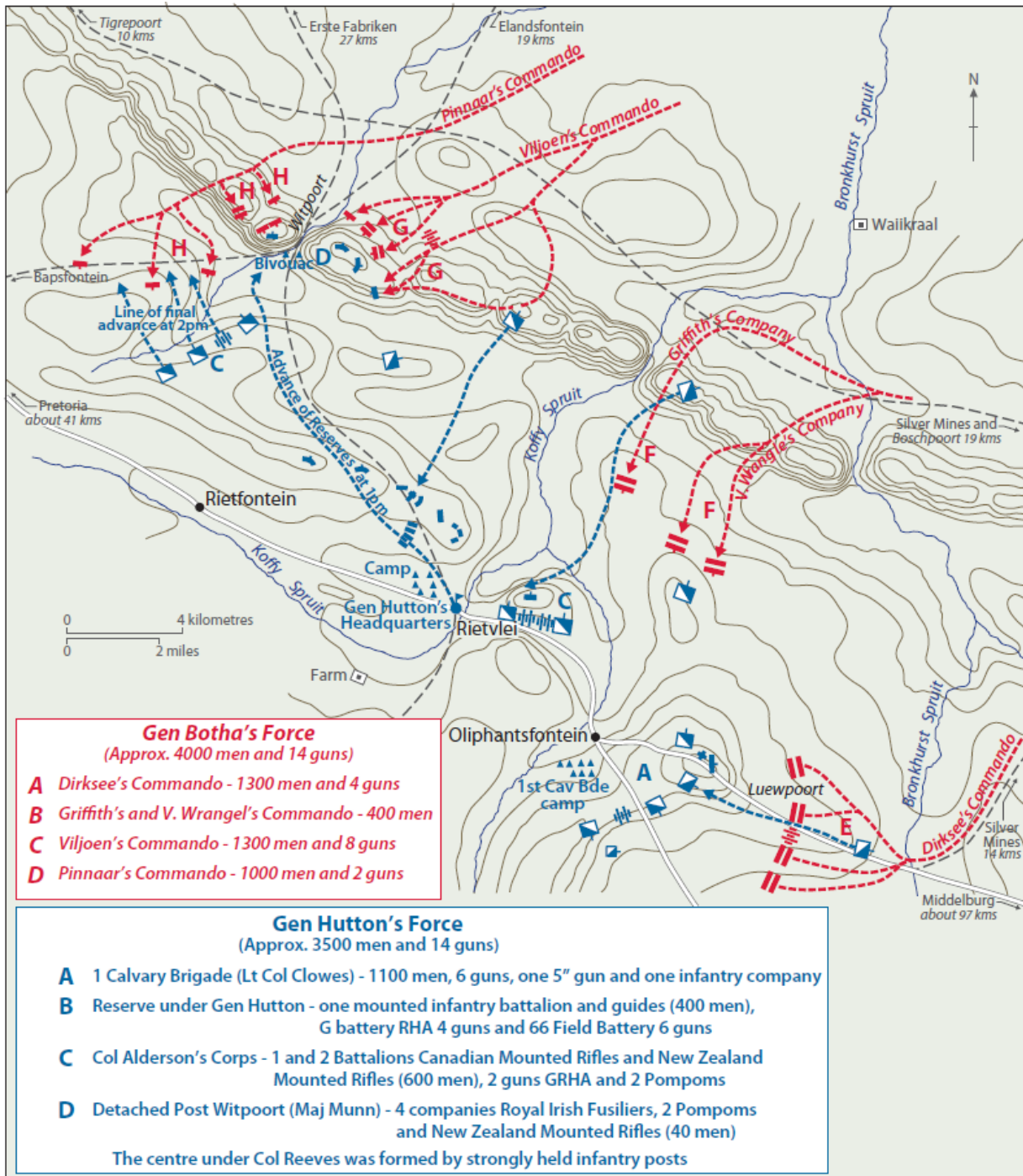
Meanwhile Botha, himself freshly reinforced, prepared for a last throw of the dice. He planned an attack to re-take Pretoria, timed to coincide with simultaneous uprisings in Johannesburg and Cape Town, which, it was hoped, would cut British lines of communication. Botha intended to advance directly through Witpoort and its surrounding areas, positions held by Hutton.

It was a sound plan, with Hutton considerably weakened by troops sent back to Pretoria. Thus, at dawn on 16 July, some 2500 Boers with 8-12 guns, under the operational command of General Ben Viljoen, began pressing Hutton's posts (and the nearby cavalry position) across more than 27 kilometres of front. The Boers first mounted a feint against Hutton's centre and then simultaneously attacked his right flank on the high ground above the cavalry position and the left flank where Hutton had established a strongpoint at an opening in a ridge of kopjes 10 kilometres north of his main camp, near Witpoort. All morning, Hutton worried that cavalry on his right might not hold and he shepherded his reserve.

Meanwhile, on the left, the Boers made determined and persistent attacks against the three companies of Royal Irish Fusiliers and 60 New Zealand mounted infantrymen (who subsequently lost their position) holding the Witpoort Pass. The attackers closed to within 100 metres, calling for surrender. The Irishmen, however, held on grimly until the early afternoon when Hutton, now confident the cavalry flank was safe, deployed a relief force of Canadians who subsequently drove the Boers from the area.

Thus, recalled Hutton, 'a very critical moment by the enemy was averted'. Had Witpoort ridge fallen, the Boers would have gotten between Hutton and Pretoria and severed the railway. As it was, by sundown the Boers were once more in full retreat. 'Through the haze of smoke', one of his men recalled, 'coloured heliograph lamps [were] flashing red, green and yellow'.

The cost of the successful defence of Hutton's position had been heavy, with 58 casualties. Yet his losses were offset to some degree for Hutton by the prestige associated with his success. Roberts took the unusual step on 18 July of wiring Hutton directly: 'Fight of 16<sup>th</sup> was most successful. I congratulate you and all concerned'.



**Figure 4: Hutton's defence of the Witpoort/Reitvlei area, 16 July 1900**

As Hutton was holding off the Boers at Witpoort, Roberts was preparing his large-scale advance to the east from Pretoria which began on 23 July. Again, Hutton and French were once more used as a mounted screen. The original plan, after crossing the Wilge, was to push quickly due east and seize a drift over Oliphant River, then move east of Middleburg, blocking the Boers' retreat by road towards Machadodorp.

Roberts, however, changed his mind mid-course, directing French against Brugspruit and Hutton to Balmoral, thus losing any chance of envelopment. 'Alas!', wrote Hutton, '[i]t appeared now to us that all hope of a successful coup, and of a summary termination of the war had vanished'. Hutton's brigade finished its advance at Middleburg, with the Boers having fled for Belfast, 56 kilometres further on. Hutton was given responsibility for the captured town, its anti-British inhabitants, and the surrounding area.

Throughout August, Hutton's brigade and attached troops stationed in and around Middleburg busied themselves patrolling while Roberts prepared for another push east, against Botha's new defensive line around Belfast. Hutton was disappointed to learn his column was to be left out of this last advance. 'The fact is', he confessed to his wife, 'I want to be in at the death of the Transvaal Republic'.

The battle began at Belfast on 24 August. Though successful, Hutton once more lamented that Botha's men escaped 'with all their guns and with little if any molestation in their retreat as usual'. Conscious of ever-dwindling British military prestige, '[s]hameful I call it!' he raged, '[w]hat will the military critics say?? Here we have some 30,000 men with quite 5000 mounted men held up by some 4 or 5000 wretched farmers—Dutch men—for whom in the old days we had so much contempt'.

## The final phase

After taking Belfast, Roberts hoped to sandwich Botha up against the border of Portuguese East Africa and, in the process, remove Transvaal's only access to a port at Lourenço Marques. The Boers could then either choose to fight or cross the border and be arrested by Portuguese police. British horses, however, were almost spent and Roberts' troops were more exhausted and ill than ever. Moreover, the terrain in the path of the proposed advance was daunting.

In this context, Kitchener sent for Hutton on 5 September and told him it had been reported as impossible to advance along the railway as initially planned, and asked for Hutton's opinion as to how he might solve the impasse. Claiming 'first rate local knowledge' of the country through his scouts, Hutton proposed to move his brigade along the watershed between the Eland and Komati Rivers, forming a link between a British infantry division 13 kilometres to the west and French's large column, reinforced by Hamilton, moving 30 kilometres to the south on Barberton.

Hutton could thus 'turn the enemy's positions' in their efforts to hold both groups in the difficult valleys thorough which they were advancing. Roberts and Kitchener agreed to the plan but, according to Hutton, looked on his expedition with 'rather a forlorn hope as the country was considered by the Boers themselves to be impassable for our troops'. Yet Hutton recognised the significance of the operation and was determined to succeed. The general idea was for the various British columns to converge on and capture Presidents Kruger and Steyn at Nellspruit. For this task, Hutton was allocated a total of 1400 mounted troops.

The final advance of Hutton's brigade began on 8 September and, the next day, he fought a difficult action against around 400 Boers among the boulders on the highest portion of the watershed between the Komati and the Eland. Despite the precipitous terrain, Hutton's bold flanking attack soon swept the Boers from the ridge and into nearby valleys. Two days later, the brigade fought another skirmish but managed to make good its advance to the edge of the deep valley of the Godwan, which appeared an obvious barrier to further movement.

The problem was that Hutton's 'watershed' at this point had shrunk to a 'narrow serrated edge'. Nonetheless, on 12 September, thanks to his guides, a personal reconnaissance and a feeling the Boers were retreating, Hutton 'decided to risk it' and sent one of his corps by an almost impassable track into the Godwan Valley with orders to gain a foothold on the southern ridge of the Kaapsche Hoop plateau, opposite his current position, north of Tafel Kop mountain.

Meanwhile, French was under pressure, 30 kilometres to the south in the deep valley of the Komati, and Hutton knew if he could make good his foothold it would greatly assist the ongoing cavalry advance. 'I took up my position on top of the highest peak and as you may suppose with deepest anxiety watched with my glasses', he later wrote, with 'French's guns booming away in the distance'. By 10am his corps, after scrambling up rocks and gullies, had gained a foothold without much Boer interference. At this moment, Hutton yelled "'go" to the rest of my Mounted troops, and in a few minutes they were all driving into the deep recesses of the Godwan'.

The risk Hutton took in crossing the Godwan was considerable but ultimately justified by its results. By 3am on 13 September, he had taken a small mining town on the highest part of the Kaapsche Hoop plateau, which commanded all roads leading east and the railway from Machardodorp to Kaapumden. In part as a consequence of his movements, which were unexpected by the Boers, French and Hamilton were

able to cross the mountains in front of him and take Barberton unopposed. Moreover, had the Boers remained on the Hoop, they would have likely caused considerable difficulties for the British infantry's advance up the Eland Valley. Hutton called this last expedition as 'certainly the most critical, if not the most important of all which I have had the good fortune to have fall to my lot'.

By now, there was nowhere else the Boers could hope to halt or even slow the British advance. On 24 September, British infantry entered Komatipoort and seized its stores, as Kruger slipped across the border and sailed for Europe. Exhausted and ragged, Botha dispersed most of the commandos into the mountains to the north. At this point and despite his earlier fears, Hutton and a great many other British officers concluded erroneously that the war was won and all that remained was to form an army of occupation. With no further use for large field formations, Hutton's brigade was broken up in early October.

## Conclusion

Taken in total, the 1<sup>st</sup> Mounted Infantry Brigade had done well. Under and aggressive and capable commander, it had proven to all and sundry that troops from around the Empire might be quickly forged into an effective fighting formation. Though distinct in background, experience and—in some ways—military/professional outlook, the brigade demonstrated that British regulars and part-time troops from Canada and the Australian colonies could fight effectively under a unified tactical command.

The key had been a leader who was aware of and embraced the idiosyncrasies of the disparate troops under his charge. Moreover, even if such troops made much of the differences between them, they were, in operational terms at least, largely cosmetic. Under the surface were shared doctrine, procedures, operating procedures and equipment. Such standardisation was perhaps much more easily attained in the context of Empire at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century than today. Yet many principles are enduring. And deep and meaningful reference to an army's past will always shed light on the dilemmas and issues of the present.

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*His publications include a history of the Army cadet movement in Australia titled 'The Torch and the Sword' (2007); a study of the first Libyan campaign in North Africa 1940-41: 'Bardia: Myth, Reality and the Heirs of Anzac' (2009); and an edited work on a number of common misinterpretations of Australia's military past: 'Zombie Myths of Australian Military History' (2010).*

*His more recent publications include a similar work in relation to the Anzac legend, titled 'Anzac's Dirty Dozen: 12 Myths of Australian Military History' (2012), a co-edited pre-World War 1 military history of Australia: 'Before the Anzac Dawn: a military history of Australia to 1915' (2013) and a co-authored account of Germany's invasion of Greece: 'Swastika over the Acropolis: re-interpreting the Nazi Invasion of Greece in World War II' (2013). His latest book, to be released in early 2015, is an investigation of Imperial defence prior to 1914 titled: 'Britannia's Shield: Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Hutton and late-Victorian Imperial Defence'.*

## SOURCES

The research behind this article is based primarily on primary records. The most important of these include a set of letters from Hutton to his wife, sent during his time in South Africa, now at the National Library of Australia (MS1215). A range of other important papers and correspondence was drawn from the 'Hutton Papers', microfilm copies of which are held in the University of NSW Canberra Library.

Records were also used from the State Library of NSW (B1680, MSS2105), State Records NSW (NRS1251, 4/7648), the Australian War Memorial (AWM1 2/22, MSS1406, MSS1406, 3DRL3310, PR82/149, PR86/126 & 261) and the National Archives (UK) (WO105/21, WO 105/7, WO 105/9).

Key secondary texts used in the preparation of the article include R. Lehane, 'Lieutenant-General Edward Hutton and "Greater Britain": late-Victorian imperialism, imperial defence and the self-governing colonies', PhD thesis, University of Sydney, 2005; C. Wilcox, *Australia's Boer War: the war in South Africa 1899-1902*, Oxford University Press: Melbourne, 2002; and C. Miller, *Painting the Map Red: Canada and the South African War, 1899-1902*, Canadian War Museum and McGill-Queen's University Press: Montreal, 1993.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> This is a biblical quote from Ecclesiastes 1:9.

# An Embedded Staff Officer in Afghanistan: observations from ‘The Engine Room’

**Brigadier M.A. Thompson, AM, Australian Army**

## Introduction

Between October 2013 and October 2014, I was deployed in Afghanistan as the CJ35 (Future Operations) in Headquarters International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Joint Command (HQ IJC). This was a unique experience, working with the US Army’s III Corps for three months and XVIII Airborne Corps for nine months.

In this environment, the robust and well-resourced CJ35 staff branch was at the centre of the planning, preparation and conduct of operations across Afghanistan. The constant high tempo, together with the routine requirement to conduct rapid but comprehensive deliberate planning, earned CJ35 branch the label of ‘The Engine Room’. This was more than a mere nickname; it was recognition across IJC that it was through the staff effort of CJ35 that the Commander and HQ staff generate tempo.

This article is not designed to describe the history or specifics of one deployment, my first to Afghanistan. Nor is it intended to comment on the success or otherwise of the Coalition campaign in Afghanistan. Such commentary will be left to others who have spent more time in the Middle East Area of Operations and, no doubt, have a deeper strategic perspective and understanding of that incredibly complex and fascinating theatre.

Many ADF officers have deployed to Afghanistan and other theatres as embedded staff officers. But no Australians had filled the US-designated position of CJ35 at HQ IJC. Hence, the purpose of this article is to offer key observations from this unique experience and to stimulate conversation regarding their relative merit. It presents four particular observations that may be of interest to the Australian Army and the ADF.

The first relates to the organisation of a senior headquarters for the planning and execution of operations, with particular reference to the CJ55 (Future Plans)-CJ35 (Future Operations)-CJ33 (Current Operations) continuum. The second delineates between planning during and at the conclusion of a campaign, and suggests that external planners have high utility in planning the latter. The third is that the Australian Army’s generalist training and education regime is in good shape. The final observation is that embedding senior Australian Army officers in US Corps and Division Headquarters during routine postings in peacetime could be an effective method of maintaining the current high level of interoperability with the US military.

## The plans-execution planning continuum

HQ IJC was established in 2007 to provide operational-level command and oversight for ISAF within the geographic boundary of Afghanistan. It was established to include a CJ55 staff branch, a CJ35 staff branch and a CJ33 staff branch, each headed by a one-star officer. These three staff branches worked in different time horizons but combined to enable a very effective planning-execution continuum.

CJ55 was responsible for longer-term and strategic planning typically beyond 180 days; CJ35 was responsible for operational planning, typically from around 180 days in advance to approximately 1-3 days in advance of an operation; and CJ33 was responsible for the conduct of operations. The planning-execution continuum provided an organisational model which, nested into the HQ’s battle rhythm, provided a framework that enabled Commander IJC to order his thinking into the respective time horizons, and to get ahead of current operations. As a result, the Commander and senior staff were rarely surprised, and subordinate headquarters normally received plenty of time to conduct their own planning.

The longer-term planning conducted by CJ55 provided the staff with the time and space to think beyond immediate operational demands. This was an invaluable capacity that provided a mechanism to enable the Commander to look further ahead, discuss the development of complex issues that required

significant analysis and development, consider the second- and third-order effects of current activities or, alternatively, to refine desired outcomes and work backwards to define near-term objectives.

Once outline plans and concepts were developed, typically around 180 days prior to execution, CJ55 staff would conduct a hand-over of planning initiatives to the CJ35 staff. Continuity of planning was assured by CJ35 staff participating in CJ55 planning, and then CJ55 staff would remain in CJ35 planning until all parties were confident that the hand-off was complete. CJ35 staff would advance the planning process to produce executable plans with fewer assumptions and unknowns. They would also assume responsibility for planning requirements that arose within the 180 day planning horizon, without necessarily involving the CJ55 staff. This role placed the CJ35 branch at the centre of HQ IJC's staff effort, as the key integrator of staff branches, specialists and peer headquarters.

Prior to the execution of a planned activity or operation, CJ35 staff would conduct a hand-over with CJ33 staff. Typically occurring between one and three days prior to execution, this hand-over often involved the hand-over of the CJ35 action officer(s) who would carry the plan through execution. This method was successfully applied for the conduct of security support to the Loya Jirga in November 2013, the Presidential and Provincial Council elections in April 2014, the Presidential run-off election in June 2014, and several other lower-profile operations and activities.

The success of this approach leads to my first observation that:

*The CJ55-CJ35-CJ33 planning-execution continuum is a very effective organisational model that has several potential applications for the ADF.*

The planning-execution continuum has potential application to the ADF at the operational-strategic level. In particular, it could be applied in the Strategic Policy Division-Military Strategic Commitments Division-Headquarters Joint Operations Command (HQ JOC) relationship, where Strategic Policy Division and Military Strategic Commitments Division could perform the 'future plans' function; the current HQ JOC J5 could perform the 'future operations' function; and the HQ JOC J3 could perform the 'current operations' function.

Such an arrangement would not only provide a clear delineation of responsibilities between Strategic Policy Division, Military Strategic Commitments Division and HQ JOC but also help to define the temporal planning and reporting responsibilities for each organisation. Such an approach fits within the current broad framework of current ADF doctrine. But it could also be made explicit in the next revision of the publication *Australian Defence Doctrine Planning (ADDP) 5.0 Joint Planning*.

Additionally, the deployment of a forward theatre command element could provide an opportunity for the ADF to utilise a CJ55-CJ35-CJ33 planning-execution continuum. While not previously attempted or envisaged, if HQ JOC ever chose to deploy a 'HQ JOC (Forward)', the 'future plans' function could be performed from Australia, while the 'future operations' and 'current operations' functions could be executed in-theatre.

Potentially expanding on either the Joint Task Force 633 construct (which provides command and control of all ADF elements deployed throughout the Middle East Area of Operations) or an established organisation such as Headquarters 1<sup>st</sup> Division, a 'HQ JOC (Forward)' would facilitate the situational awareness that only comes from being forward, at the same time allowing longer-term planners to maintain close links with policy organisations and intelligence agencies in Australia, while minimising the number of planners required to be deployed.

## **Planning the conclusion of a campaign**

During 2014, much of the ISAF and IJC planning focused on the transition to the 'Resolute Support' mission on 1 January 2015. This transition marked the end of the 13-year ISAF mission and the beginning of a new mission, with a different emphasis, force posture and authorities. Transition planning was hampered by the much-publicised delays in the Bilateral Security Agreement and NATO status of forces processes, and related delays in announcements from Troop Contributing Nations, including the US, regarding details of their contributions beyond 31 December 2014.



While political machinations will always influence military planning, ISAF transition planning was also hampered by a lack of objectivity and lateral thinking among many ISAF planners. After 13 years of operations in Afghanistan, it was all too easy for planners (many with multiple Afghanistan deployments) to adopt a historical paradigm, and/or stick to a plan that was either outdated or no longer relevant.

This mindset, while not ubiquitous, was sufficiently prevalent during 2014 that planning for transitions and change became unnecessarily difficult or, in some formations, opposed outright. All too often, in-theatre planners were found defending the current plan, rather than objectively considering the relative merit of operational proposals.

This experience highlights my second observation:

*When considering the conclusion of a campaign, planning should be led by an external planning team, rather than by those planners currently in the campaign.*

An external team of planners would be less likely to succumb to extant 'group-think', less influenced by the tactical perspective of deployed commanders, less wedded to history or historical paradigms, and likely to have a more objective perspective.

### **Australian Army officer training**

Heading a multinational team of up to 70 planners provided a unique insight into the planning skills of officers from over 20 nations. This experience also provided an opportunity to compare the planning skills of Australian Army officers with those of their international colleagues.

In this environment, the Australian Army post-staff college officers more than held their own, including in comparison with highly-regarded graduates from the US Army's School of Advanced Military Studies and the US Marine Corps' School of Advanced Warfare. In fact, my assessment is that Australian Army post-staff college officers are as good as graduates from either.

The quality, effectiveness and generalist planning credentials of Australian Army officers was constantly evident, and gained widespread praise from senior officers across the Coalition. This experience was especially evident when an Australian Army logistics officer became the planner of choice within CJ35 branch, with Coalition officers of all nationalities and ranks oblivious to his logistics background. This outcome, and the fact that an officer with a background in the Royal Australian Corps of Signals could perform the duties of CJ35 on a Corps Headquarters at war, illustrates my third observation:

*The Australian Army's generalist training and education regime is in good shape.*

The Australian Army's All Corps Officer Training Continuum (ACOTC) and the ADF's Joint Military Professional Education (JPME) combine to produce high quality generalist Army officers who require minimal additional preparation to perform to a high standard as embedded staff officers in coalition organisations. The Australian Army should seek to maintain the quality of this product by retaining the structure of the ACOTC and JPME, and consistently refine its content to ensure that it continues to meet Army's requirements.

As there was no opportunity during this deployment to observe the generalist planning skills of RAN and RAAF officers, and to compare them with US Navy and US Air Force counterparts, this observation is necessarily focused on the performance of Army officers. However, RAN and RAAF may wish to consider the structure and content of their respective generalist officer training and education regimes so that future opportunities to embed planners in operational-level coalition headquarters can be fully exploited.

### **Maintaining the relationship between the Australian Army and the US military**

After 13 years of operations in a US-led coalition, with the possibility of more on the horizon, the ADF's relationship with the US military remains very important. One of the methods available to the Australian Army to maintain the current high level of interoperability with the US military is through the placement of officers in influential exchange positions. While many such positions currently exist, the value of these

positions must be constantly reviewed to ensure that opportunities for the Australian Army and the ADF are maximised, and requirements met.

While deployed, I noted the effectiveness and utility of the Canadian approach of embedding Deputy Commanding Generals in US Army Corps and Division Headquarters. The Canadian Army embeds a one-star officer in XVIII Airborne Corps as the Deputy Commanding General (Operations), and also embedded a one-star officer as the Deputy Commanding General (Support) in 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division during its time as Regional Command (East).

As 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division was replaced by 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division in Regional Command (East), the Deputy Commanding General (Support) appointment was filled by an Australian Brigadier who, as a result, gained significant influence in the most kinetic region of Afghanistan, as well as being presented with immense professional development opportunities. The Canadian approach is very similar to the recently-adopted opportunity to embed an Australian Major General in US Army Pacific, with the notable differences that the Canadians have applied this approach at the one-star level and have implemented it across multiple US Army headquarters.

US Corps and Division headquarters include multiple Deputy Commanding Generals, covering functions such as operations and support, in addition to an Assistant Commanding General who is, in essence, the second-in-command. These are highly-influential appointees, who work closely with their respective commanders, and typically are officers likely to be promoted to the next rank.

Therefore, the placement of senior officers in a US Corps or Division headquarters provides a unique opportunity to form a close relationship, develop a high degree of trust, and generate influence with a 'rising star' of the US Army. This leads to my fourth observation that:

*The Australian Army should actively prioritise opportunities to embed star-ranked officers in senior US Army headquarters.*

Embedding officers in US Corps and Division headquarters at the one- and two-star level, 'General Officers' in the US vernacular, would achieve far greater influence for Australia, the Australian Army and the ADF than could be achieved by a liaison officer or instructor. Such senior level interaction and relationships developed during routine postings in peacetime would provide invaluable avenues to maintain hard-won operational, capability and planning interoperability with the US Army.

## **Conclusion**

This article has presented four key observations from my experience while deployed as the CJ35 in HQ IJC during 2013-14 that are relevant for discussion within the Australian Army and the broader ADF. The CJ55-CJ35-CJ33 planning-execution continuum, as practised within HQ IJC, is a very effective organisational model that has potential application to the ADF at the operational-strategic level. In particular, it could be applied to the Military Strategic Commitments Division-HQ JOC relationship, and also in a HQ JOC (Forward), should such a concept be considered in the future.

Additionally, when considering the conclusion of a campaign, planning should be led by an external planning team, rather than by those planners currently in the campaign. External planners are less likely to be influenced by the perspectives of deployed commanders, be less wedded to history or historical paradigms, and are likely to have a more objective perspective.

The performance of Australian Army post-staff college officers in planning roles across ISAF demonstrated that the Australian Army's training and education regime is in good shape. The ACOTC and JPME combine to produce high quality generalist Army officers who require minimal additional preparation to perform to a high standard as embedded staff officers in coalition organisations. The Australian Army should seek to maintain the quality of its all-Corps generalist training.

Finally, the Australian Army should actively prioritise opportunities to embed star-ranked officers in senior US Army warfighting headquarters. Such appointments would enable Australian star-rank officers to develop close relationships and generate significant influence with senior US Army officers. Such

relationships, developed during routine postings in peacetime, would help the Australian Army to maintain its hard-won operational, capability and planning interoperability with the US Army.

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# Chaplaincy in Mental Health Treatment

**Chaplain Peter Devenish-Meares, Australian Army**

## Introduction

One day when I was visiting an external mental health treatment facility, an in-patient said to me 'Padre, I am tired of taking so many tablets. I want to talk; I want to you as a padre'. This anecdote is real and poignant. It points to and underscores the challenges around building a truly holistic regime of mental health-related treatments.<sup>1</sup>

It also highlights the fact that treatment and recovery can be intentionally person-centred; that is, the person may but does not necessarily receive the full range of necessary care or trans-diagnostic interventions and methods of care that should be actively available. Going further, patients have a demonstrable right to the full range of arguably inter-related and complementary treatments of a medical, psychiatric, spiritual, sacramental and psychological care.

This brief article seeks to contribute a personal chaplaincy perspective to the growing awareness of and need for currently-serving personnel and post-discharge treatment regimes. It offers emerging, experiential information and evidence that arises from collaborations with a university-based post-traumatic research centre, a literature review and my chaplaincy work in an infantry battalion from 2008 to the present.<sup>2</sup> It also notes that the stigma so often experienced by those seeking help or declaring there is an illness can be lessened by a chaplain's early and ongoing support alongside—and yet never at cross purposes—to the necessary work of mental care providers.<sup>3</sup>

The context is long-term chaplaincy involvement in pre-deployment preparations and considerable rear-detail support for deployments to Timor-Leste and Afghanistan, and associated return-to-Australia actions. This work is therefore grounded in the following:

- Preparation for overseas military deployments – readying individually and collectively; briefings, prayer, family preparation conversations; family visits;
- Chaplaincy during the deployments – spiritual and pastoral care; focus on family and partner care; linkages with other support networks; referral to agencies;
- Care for those who were not selected to deploy overseas; and
- Post-return to Australia and in the subsequent year(s) – particular attention to those experiencing the onset of symptoms relating to mental health issues; chaplaincy visits to families; assistance to external mental health treatment facilities.

While the focus is often on emergency and crisis-oriented mental health circumstances, I also acknowledge the pro-active work that occurs around building personal and unit resilience, and 'wellness' as a barrier or inoculation if you will against various stressors and trauma.

## The concept of 'wellness'

Many organisations would describe wellness as 'a broad concept, and it requires everyone to think more generally about factors that may be influencing a person's overall well-being ... [albeit] not all of these factors exist in the workplace'.<sup>4</sup> Yet I wonder if we are prepared to consider spiritual and pastoral care in this mix of what could be used as inoculators and enablers.

I also speculate that part of the challenge lies in how people describe stressors. For example, the following definition seems to lack something to do with inner meaning and values: 'a stressor is a physical and psychological demand to which the individual responds'.<sup>5</sup> Where is there room to consider and treat moral, values-based or meaning-oriented stressors?

Psychological well-being is defined as:

[Being more] than being free from stress, and not having other psychological problems. It encompasses positive self-perception, positive relations with others, environmental mastery, autonomy, purpose in life and emotions inclined towards a healthy development.<sup>6</sup>

While we may never be free from stressors, does well-being also relate to questions and issues of meaning, value, mortality and perhaps even belief? On this point, if we take personal recovery of the unwell seriously, then we must consider the whole person as they seek to make sense of life in many ways.<sup>7</sup>

The answer lies in the fact that there is another form of well-being, namely spiritual well-being. This is at least and arguably more than 'subjective experience that incorporates psychological well-being and meaning in life'.<sup>8</sup> To reflect this broader and more inclusive view of mental health treatment and care, Hoge *et al* assert that 'professional help [is help] ... from a mental health professional, a general medical doctor, or a chaplain or other member of the clergy, in either a military or civilian treatment setting'.<sup>9</sup>

Despite this clear imperative, I wonder how many current mental health treatment regimes at the local and immediate level—and more broadly in national strategic planning documents—actively incorporate such multi-disciplinary thinking, let alone interventions? Certainly, there will be those who would ardently assert that we live in a post-modern, non-religious society and that there is no place for spirituality. Or perhaps they would say that we did not consider such themes as they are not represented in the evidence-based literature we have utilised. However, to accept such often powerfully-argued statements would be to discount or even ignore broader but no less crucial personal treatment-oriented evidence, themes and issues such as mission, personal meaning, continuum of care modalities and the effect of moral injury, just to name a few.

Many practitioners may have come across some or all of these themes in the therapy room. In fact, it could be argued strongly that to ignore such meaning-oriented and spiritual themes makes any mental health strategy far less effective than it could otherwise be. The other risk is that despite the stated goal of innovation in mental health treatment, other forms of care and treatment may be under-funded or ignored altogether. Moreover, unnecessary suffering may be exacerbated if underlying spiritual, values-based or meaning-oriented causes are not addressed.

According to the *Webster Dictionary*, suffering is 'misery resulting from affliction', whereas 'psychological suffering [results from] ... a certain issue or event that caused great distress ... [and invokes] feelings of mental or physical pain'.<sup>10</sup> It includes grief, burnout and job stress, and has been described as having 'no boundaries' and, in a workplace context, is a 'moral and financial concern'.<sup>11</sup>

For the disaffected and suffering, there are a plethora of formal, health-oriented treatments available. These include therapy and pharmacological interventions, which are all for the good. Yet these do not necessarily consider the whole person—body, mind and spirit. My survey of pastoral care developments related to the workplace over the last 40 years suggests that little progress has been made in the development of comparative psycho-spiritual praxis to do with treating 'brokenness' and offering the spiritual values of detachment, healing, forgiveness and self-love/compassion, however much these may augment self-care, self-acceptance and return to functioning. This is by no means limited to the workplace.

## **Is treatment truly inter-disciplinary?**

Notwithstanding medical and psychological needs that arise from self-referral, screening or command concerns, issues to do with personal meaning, intimacy and suffering may be existential or spiritual in nature when it comes to mental health issues. Chaplains can testify that we often walk alongside people

trying to make sense of failure, shock and unexpected events and actions. They may have even suffered injury to do with adjusting to crisis or actions.

Recently, I participated in a full-day mental health conference oriented to treatment of serving Defence members and veterans. It was a valuable and inter-disciplinary event. Yet as I listened and collaborated, and heard many valuable treatment and interventions, I failed to hear of issues to do with personal meaning, compassion, belief, spirituality and values. Such issues and phenomena may have been inherently present but they were explicitly absent.

It can similarly be noted from recent conversations with allied health leaders and from the author's reviews of DVA-related mental health plans that there is some absence of chaplaincy and pastoral care programs. This is despite the fact that such chaplaincy work has proven vital across many theatres and operations for well over hundred years.

Even if we discount, just for a moment, the many valuable religious and overtly spiritual care activities that a chaplain offers, even from self-reports of patients and commanders it appears that chaplaincy has a demonstrable effect in supporting the suffering in many other ways and this includes pro-active work with families. This is often to assist people explore what and how they are dealing with trauma in a pastoral dialogue to do with meaning, morality, beliefs and personal ethics—sometimes with transcendence but always with a personal care focus.

For commanders, we also give support and advice about moral, ceremonial issues, the collective need to grieve and celebrate key dates/anniversaries, offer healing processes, welfare matters, care and spirituality often in times of high tempo. For individual service personnel, we are often the first point of call for issues as wide ranging as relational distress, work performance, emotional pain, making sense and addiction issues; and naturally we refer all relevant issues to medical and psychological professionals.

Yet is that where a chaplaincy role ends? Oftentimes, the chaplain has to offer a view that encourages broader thinking that goes beyond the sense of competing, success and fighting for scarce resources, and into a place of relational intimacy where peace and rest can become a viable state.

The key aspect is that a joint, multi-dimensional approach to supporting our ill soldiers is vital. The treatment of PTSD and other mental health illnesses is not an exact science and I contend that a multi-dimensional approach early can help identify the best form of treatment. A failure to ensure multi-dimensional care, including spiritual care, could mean that a chaplain is absent as a person fights through the illness.

Commanders have stated that the unit chaplain is often the most accessible person in the 'personal support plan'. This is particularly relevant when a doctor is not readily available. The chaplain provides insights and access to an individual who may be closing themselves off to others. Noting that capability and people are our highest priority means we must capitalise and embrace all treatment capabilities, particularly those that can contribute to enhancing wellness and safety.

Going further, people experience, feel and suffer at unexpected times and for unplanned reasons. At their core, when they are laid bare by trials and humbled by failure and life, inner joy and conviction seem far away. Clearly, early intervention is a key goal and it must not exclude any action that alleviates suffering, improves personal outcomes and builds personal capacity to function and hopefully return to full functioning.

In my chaplaincy experience, personal needs arose in pastoral care terms via social media, telephone conversations, attendance at mid-deployment family events, and the like. Very often (perhaps in more than 50 per cent of initiating events), it resulted in referral of medical, psychological and more complex needs to other professionals.

One could say, and in my experience in a large battalion that actively sought to care for its hurt and suffering members, that chaplains were part of the daily care and treatment mix. This also involved intentional conversations, prayer and rituals to do with grief, healing and forgiveness. Deliberate, multi-disciplinary care and connections to other support agencies (family support for example) were considered a vital part of the treatment mix for the broken. I recall that case-conferencing with the

medical practitioner, psychologist, chaplain and rehabilitation specialist meant that holistic care was the established priority.

Each specialist had a part to play in the continuum of care. Care for those seeking to integrate their experience and their sense of self, safety and place in the world raises meaning-oriented, values-based, virtue-related issues.

In terms of the broadest continuum of care approaches, well-known Franciscan priest Father Richard Rohr says—drawing on 40 years of care for prisoners, the most vulnerable in society and complex workplace needs—that '[psychological therapy] cannot [alone] deal with the ontological, metaphysical and theological self'.<sup>12</sup> This is not to deride therapeutic interventions, rather it is to augment and support them spiritually.<sup>13</sup>

How can one feel love and compassion for others let alone for self in these times? This is a key focus, noting that I fear that if I get caught into parlance and argument I will miss the dialogue that may just help contribute to an emerging anthropology where identity and inner life can be formed at least part by all of these

### **Whole self: whole care**

How do we as carers, commanders and as a community notice, engage and support the treatment of the 'whole' suffering self—which is body, mind and spirit as a sense making self; a unique individual who experiences and reacts. Chaplains often hear personal stories and narratives as people make sense of the situation and they relate stories of physical injury, relational impairment or personal despair. Pastorally, this can mean the story is told over and over again and people can get caught in the one even unhelpful version of the story and its outcome.<sup>14</sup>

Alternatively, over time, and we are dealing with a whole person, new understanding and acceptance can emerge as the person hears their own telling of what happened and moves to add new aspects or shifts the conclusion. This does not just take place in a clinical setting. In psychology too, there is a debate about too much or too little rumination; there can also be too little or too much thinking and agonising.

### **Barriers to treatment**

Pointedly, a US study found conclusive evidence that there are real barriers to soldiers accessing treatment.<sup>15</sup> Whether true or not, and offering no judgment about the elicited statements, the fact remains that in this very large study (involving 5,422 participants) the following were perceived as real barriers to care:

- I don't trust mental health professionals
- I don't know where to get help
- I don't have adequate transportation
- Mental health care costs too much money
- It would be too embarrassing
- Members of my unit might have less confidence in me
- My unit leadership might treat me differently
- My leaders would blame me for the problem
- I would be seen as weak.

I argue strongly in light of the above findings that chaplaincy can be an additional and readily-accessible and often-accessed resource to ameliorate the risks of *not* getting treatment. Certainly, all access points in the care continuum must work to address barriers and these include more work with families, outreach, education, and 'changes in the models of health care delivery, such as increases in the allocation of mental health services in primary care clinic'.<sup>16</sup> To this I would add the active inclusion of chaplains in both serving and veteran treatment programs.

Some therapists talk about the patient as expert and empowering the ability for personal choice. Gabriel Marcel sees the self as one who can make life-giving choices that are driven by anxiety or love, all the

while determining for themselves whether they are caught in their own pain.<sup>17</sup> Such an approach may not be welcome by some in the allied health world. Yet the fact that even secularists, existentialists and humanists speak of choices, sometimes of transcendence, and have something to say about the essence and importance of the self is no small point.

Chaplaincy is often part of the first response when there is a mental health or medical issue, whether it be injury, anxiety, mood or a disaffection issue. This is often in the onset or identification of major and depressive symptoms, and necessitates the conveyance to urgent medical and psychological assessment and treatment. From experience, we know that pastoral responses are often engaged at the early stages or throughout the local unit-based ‘trajectory of disorder’ and, more pointedly, as the treatment ensues if the person has visibility of and connection to their home workplace.

What has proven vital is low-key presence and compassion. Despite this, I note from a literature review that ideas of down-to-earth compassion, which a chaplain intentionally brings, can be absent in some research and praxis settings. Just as a starting point for later work, Schopenhauer proposed that compassion is the motivator of moral action.<sup>18</sup> He also does not deride the motivation for love.

To allow for those who may or may not say they are religious or overtly spiritual should not exclude compassion and care. Schopenhauer does not concern himself with the source so much as the action of loving kindness in itself, which for me links love to compassion once again. This is well represented in the following:

The immediate *participation*, independent of all ulterior consideration, primarily in the *suffering* of another, and thus in the prevention or elimination of it; for all satisfaction and well-being consists in this. It is simply and solely compassion that is the real basis for all *voluntary* justice and *genuine* loving-kindness. Only insofar as an action has sprung from compassion does it have moral value.<sup>19</sup>

## A way forward

Leaders, chaplains and mental health professionals need to keep the suffering person at the centre of all strategic, operational and clinical planning. If we truly remain person-centred, it is a failure not to consider questions and needs with meaning, values, virtue, belief and making sense. While a chaplain is not a mental health practitioner—aside from the vital spiritual and meaning-oriented pastoral work directed at symptoms—they can support and/or offer self-care and peer support choices.

The author plans to more closely investigate the choices, sometimes of transcendence, and have something to say about the essence and importance of the self. In this, I hope to bring chaplaincy further into dialogue with psychological treatment, particularly when life is difficult and suffering occurs.<sup>20</sup>

Finally, and with no wish to criticise existing and vital mental health care, I offer some positively-oriented conclusions for consideration:

- A joint, multi-dimensional approach to supporting ill soldiers is vital.
- The treatment of PTSD and other mental health illnesses is not an exact science. A multi-dimensional approach early can identify the best form of treatment.
- Commanders have stated that the unit chaplain is often the most accessible person in the ‘personal support plan. This is particularly relevant when a doctor is not readily available.
- Chaplains provide insights and access to an individual who may be closing themselves off to others. People are our highest priority, so we must embrace all capabilities, especially those that contribute to wellness and safety.
- Chaplains are often a localised first responder—yet it is not clear just how often the ensuing treatment system incorporates pastoral care.
- Mental health planning processes may be inadvertently overlooking the place of pastoral care, especially to do with meaning, healing, relational forgiveness and compassion.



- It is not clear how often treatment plans and case-conferencing processes include pro-active healing and forgiveness steps in the treatment mix.
- From chaplains' observations and experiences, and feedback from commanders, chaplaincy has a demonstrable effect in its pro-active work with families and those in external treatment.
- Exercise of non-judgmental listening and ongoing compassion are often an under-explored support to treatment.
- Interventions must include the widest range of pastoral and mental health-related professionals, which includes chaplains and other member of the clergy.

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## DISCLAIMER

This paper represents the author's personal views, and does not necessarily represent the views of the Australian Army or any other organisation.

## NOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> I am not for one moment discounting the need for pharmacological treatment.
  - <sup>2</sup> Evidence has to do with testable outcomes, bearing in mind that this may vary due to the nature of comparisons, measurement, length of effort and replicability of effort.
  - <sup>3</sup> Charles W. Hoge, Carl A. Castro, Stephen C. Messer, Dennis McGurk, Dave I. Cotting and Robert L. Koffman, 'Combat Duty in Iraq and Afghanistan: mental health problems, and barriers to care', *New England Medical Journal*, Vol. 351, No. 1, 2004.
  - <sup>4</sup> Christopher J. Cunningham, B.L. Weathington and L.A. Burke, 'Riding the Wellness Wave: implications for organizations', *Employee Benefit Plan Review*, Vol. 63, No. 5, 2008, p. 8.
  - <sup>5</sup> Frank J. Landy and Jeffrey M. Conte, *Work in the 21st Century: an introduction to industrial-organizational psychology*, Blackwell: Malden, 2007, p. G-19.
  - <sup>6</sup> Halim Saricaoglu and Coşkun Arslan, 'An Investigation into Psychological Well-being Levels of Higher Education Students with Respect to Personality Traits and Self-compassion', *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice*, 2013, which draws on C.D. Ryff, 'Psychological well-being in adult life', *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, Vol. 4, No. 4, 1995, pp. 99-104. It is noteworthy that it made particular reference to '[p]urpose in life means the properties of direction, aims and purposefulness that add meaning to their lives', yet did not examine spirituality or religion.

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- 7 Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: the making of the modern identity*, Harvard University Press: Cambridge, 1989, p. 56.
- 8 Juanita K. Manning-Walsh, 'Psycho-spiritual Well-being and Symptom Distress in Women with Breast Cancer', *Oncology Nursing Forum*, Vol. 32, No. 3, 2005, pp. E. 56-62.
- 9 Hoge *et al*, 'Combat Duty in Iraq and Afghanistan', p. 19.
- 10 See, for example, <<http://www.webster-dictionary.org/definition/suffering>> accessed 9 February 2015.
- 11 Jane M. Lilius, Jason Kanow, Jane. E. Dutton, Monica Worline and Sally Maitlis, 'Compassion Revealed: what we know about compassion at work (and where we need to know more)', in K. Cameron and G. Spreitzer (eds.), *Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship*, Oxford University Press: New York, 2011, p. 4.
- 12 Richard Rohr, *Immortal Diamond: the search for our true self*, SPCK Publishing: London, 2013, p. 33.
- 13 Even philosophers argue about what constitutes the self and how this is given effect.
- 14 Re-telling can lead to rumination and even over-examination.
- 15 Hoge *et al*, 'Combat Duty in Iraq and Afghanistan', p. 21.
- 16 Hoge *et al*, 'Combat Duty in Iraq and Afghanistan'.
- 17 Gabriel Marcel, *Position et Approche: concrètes du mystère ontologique*, Editions du Cerf: Paris, 1957, p. 53.
- 18 Arthur Schopenhauer, *On the Basis of Morality*, translated by E.F.J. Payne, Berghahan Books: Providence, 1995.
- 19 Schopenhauer, *On the Basis of Morality*, p. 144.
- 20 I am referring to the relevancy of Gabriel Marcel and Karl Jaspers to this theological discussion on 'as thyself', although Jaspers admits the *self* concept is ambiguous; Gabriel Marcel, *Mystery of Being*, Harvill Press: London, 1951; Karl Jaspers, *Philosophy of Existence*, 1938. I also recall Heidegger here, who indicates that a sense of *being* is particular to being to human; Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, translated by John Macquarie and Edward Robinson, S.C.M. Press: London, 1962. In a broad sense, one's existence is primary consideration and I speculate that 'if' the self can be separate or know itself in some sense without getting involved in the philosophical debates, it must be treated as an entity worthy of personal care.

# The Future of the ADF <sup>1</sup>

**Wing Commander Andrew Hoffmann, CSC, RAAF**

## Introduction

As decade-long operations in Afghanistan and the Middle East scale down, the ADF must pause, take stock and plan a way ahead—just as it did in the aftermath of previous conflicts, including the Second World War and at the end of the Cold War. But this time is different. Australia is more closely aligned to the US than ever before; US global hegemony is being challenged by a rising China; and the globe is edging its way back to multipolarity. For the first time since the Second World War in the Pacific, the multipolar actors are performing on the stage that is Australia's front-yard.

In creating a way ahead for the ADF for the next 15 years, it is important to acknowledge that the ADF does not exist for its own sake—it cannot design its way ahead in isolation. Three critical factors will shape the ADF's future: the environment that the ADF expects to operate in; the tasks that the Australian government expects the ADF to undertake; and the ADF capabilities needed to achieve those tasks.

This article aims to examine these critical factors, distilling the broad characteristics required of ADF capabilities over the next 15 years. It does not attempt to divine the likely operations that the ADF will need to conduct, nor does it delve into the detail of the specific force design required to conduct those operations. It argues that the ADF needs to be an intelligence-driven, balanced, mobile and culturally-smart force that can adapt, innovate and scale-down to the requirements of expeditionary operations conducted within the Indo-Pacific region.

It also asserts that the ADF needs to be designed for the defence of Australia, interoperable with the US for high-end warfighting, and integrated with other arms of government. It needs to proactively engage with the region and be willing to participate in and learn from minor operations. The force needs to be deliberately small and focused on core capabilities but technologically advanced and able to expand to meet the needs of larger conflicts given sufficient warning time. Of all these characteristics, 'flexibility' is the key to ADF success in the next 15 years.

The most fundamental lesson that we need to learn from military history is that we need to be careful learning lessons from military history. As Michael Howard acknowledges, 'events or personalities from other epochs may be illuminating, but equally they mislead... [W]hat is valid in one situation may, because of entirely altered circumstances, be quite untenable the next time'.<sup>2</sup> This warning is echoed by General David Petraeus, who cautions that 'misapplied lessons of history may be more dangerous than ignorance of the past'.<sup>3</sup>

Richards Heuer, former head of the methodology unit within the Directorate of Intelligence of the Central Intelligence Agency, cautions that utilising historical analogies tends to cause policy makers to become backward looking and solve the mistakes of the previous generation.<sup>4</sup> In seeking to avoid these pitfalls, this article takes note of Heuer's advice that 'the greater the number of potential analogues an analyst has at his or her disposal, the greater the likelihood of selecting an appropriate one'.<sup>5</sup>

Consequently, this article—while including lessons from the Second World War and the Cold War—also draws on lessons from other periods to inform the way ahead for the ADF as it prepares for the next 15 years.

## The future environment

The future environment will have a significant impact on the way ahead for the ADF. The environment determines the areas in which the ADF will be required to operate, the potential adversaries that the ADF may be required to fight, and the types of operations the ADF may need to conduct. In examining the future environment, it is important to acknowledge three significant factors. Firstly, the Indo-Pacific

region is evolving. Secondly, if we want to operate successfully within the Indo-Pacific environment, we need to understand it. Thirdly, any attempt to predict the future is difficult.

The Indo-Pacific region is evolving into the new global epicentre. As current national strategic guidance stresses, ‘the most significant factor for our national security is the impact of shifts in the global balance of power’,<sup>6</sup> with the rise of China and India ‘shaping the emergence of the Indo-Pacific as a single strategic arc’.<sup>7</sup> The projected growth in the Indo-Pacific region triggered the ‘US pivot’ or ‘rebalance to Asia’, which aims ‘to support a peaceful region where sovereign states can enjoy continued security and prosperity’.<sup>8</sup>

The relationship between the US and China is the most critical relationship to the future of the region.<sup>9</sup> In many ways, the rise of China to compete with—and possibly ultimately replace—the US as the dominant global power is a natural evolutionary process that mirrors the transition of power that occurred between Britain and the US earlier last century. In that instance, the transition of power occurred peacefully. It is in Australia’s national interest to ensure that any future transition is just as peaceful.

The context of a new global power emerging at the end of lengthy combat operations parallels the challenge that faced the US and its allies at the end of the Second World War. US experience highlighted that the newly-formed US Air Force was probably the most proactive of the services in adapting to the post-war environment.<sup>10</sup> General Carl Spaatz, its first Chief of Air Staff, was sceptical of the new ‘peace’ and likely effectiveness of the recently-formed UN, integrating lessons from the strategic bombing campaign against Germany to massively reorganise the US Air Force to meet his expectation of an emerging Soviet threat.

The US Air Force’s ability to proactively focus on the future rather than remain anchored in the past is reminiscent of the US Marine Corps in the inter-war period. The Marines, under threat of becoming a marginalised or even disbanded force, were proactive in seeking out a new and relevant role.<sup>11</sup> They established an amphibious doctrine for the Pacific, based on lessons learned from the failed Gallipoli campaign from the First World War, and were forthright in planning for Japan as the future enemy.<sup>12</sup>

As the ADF contemplates a possible period of peace, these historical examples offer clear lessons. The ADF needs to focus on learning from, but not anchor to, the expeditionary counterinsurgency operations that have concluded. The counterinsurgency experience needs to be integrated into an ADF that is repositioned for future security challenges focused on the Indo-Pacific region. This should include planning for operations against a technologically-advanced and numerically-superior potential adversary.

We need to understand the Indo-Pacific region if we are to successfully operate in it. The ADF has a predominantly white, Anglo-Saxon heritage and is at risk of being culturally ignorant when conducting operations within the Indo-Pacific arc.<sup>13</sup> The Vietnam War highlighted the inability of the US to adapt to the cultural nuances of its adversary. It was only in 1968—four years after the commencement of offensive operations against Vietnam—that the US appeared to broadly acknowledge and counter the cultural nuance of the North Vietnamese strategy.<sup>14</sup>

The Vietnam experience underpins the RAND Corporation’s assertion that we need to develop a deep understanding of the governing system of an adversary.<sup>15</sup> Australian operations in the Indo-Pacific require a similarly strong regional understanding. The Australian Government is already committed to establishing key relationships with South Korea, Japan, Indonesia, India and China, as essential components of our national strategy, providing ‘a community that is able to discuss political, economic and security issues, and act cooperatively to address them’.<sup>16</sup>

Importantly, for the ADF, these relationships also provide a framework through which an understanding of the region and its many cultures can be developed. This is as important to working with future coalition partners as it is to defeating future adversaries. The ADF needs to invest in regional engagement and it needs to understand its potential future adversaries within the Indo-Pacific arc.

The most significant factor in analysing the future environment, however, is that it is difficult to predict. Forecasting the future environment for the ADF is one of the tasks assigned to defence intelligence personnel. Yet Phillip Tetlock, for example, asserts that ‘although we often talk ourselves into believing we live in a predictable world, we delude ourselves’.<sup>17</sup> Nobel Prize-winning psychologist Daniel

Kahneman similarly contends that ‘everything makes sense in hindsight.... The illusion that we understand the past fosters overconfidence in our ability to predict the future’.<sup>18</sup>

Twentieth century military history seems to support the notion that prediction is difficult. After the Second World War, the US failed to predict North Korea’s surprise invasion of South Korea in 1950, and General MacArthur failed to predict the entry of China into the war.<sup>19</sup> Great Britain failed to predict Argentina’s invasion of the Falkland Islands in 1982, and Argentina failed to predict the British resolve and speed of response.<sup>20</sup> The US failed to predict the collapse of the Soviet Union and, after its collapse, failed to predict the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait—just as Iraq failed to predict the resolve and cohesion of the coalition to restore Kuwait’s sovereignty.<sup>21</sup>

In every war, it would seem, at least one of the belligerents fails in their prediction. The lesson to take from history is that any strategic intelligence forecast 15 years into the future should be treated with a degree of scepticism.<sup>22</sup> Consequently, the currently-vogue theme of the ‘rise of China’ is useful in terms of ADF capability and contingency planning. But it should not become the sole focus. The ADF needs to remain flexible and adaptable—and it needs to be ready at shorter notice to successfully conduct a wider breadth of lower-intensity operations within the region.

## **Government expectations**

The Australian Government’s expectations of the ADF will play a large part in shaping the way ahead for the next 15 years. Modern democracies are built around the Clausewitzian concept that wars, and therefore militaries, are an extension of politics. Any discussion of a future ADF must therefore take into account the likely plans and requirements of the government-of-the-day.

The first responsibility of government is to defend Australia and its interests from direct attack. While the current National Security Strategy asserts that ‘the likelihood of a conventional armed attack on our territory is remote’, it notes that ‘the consequence of such an attack could be devastating’.<sup>23</sup> The requirement to defend Australia through the interdiction of forces in the ‘air-sea gap’ is, therefore, as valid today as it was when the term was coined in the post-Vietnam era, which ushered in the strategy of deterrence and self-reliance.<sup>24</sup>

This defence of the ‘air-sea gap’ implies a maritime strategy: mobile forces—primarily naval and air—capable of conducting operations across the breadth of the continent and its waters to the north. The primacy of the defence of Australia mission must continue to drive force structures: long-range, mobile forces must continue to provide the backbone of a balanced ADF force, adaptable to missions other than the defence of Australia. For the future ADF, this means that the role of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) of the northern approaches and the use of small but highly-mobile forces in intelligence-led interdiction operations will remain key capabilities and tasks.

The Australian Government’s second expectation of the ADF is that it can protect national interests in the region and around the globe. However, the definition of ‘national interests’ increasingly includes the requirement to protect economic interests, particularly in a global environment where the number of small, market-sensitive economies that are vulnerable to economic coercion has increased.<sup>25</sup>

In the increasingly globalised Indo-Pacific region, and with an increasingly export-oriented Australian economy, it is easy to envisage economic diplomacy and coercion playing a greater role over the next 15 years. For example, James Goldrick has argued that ‘the ADF may need to protect vital energy shipments ... [or as part of a coalition] provide for the wider protection of trade and essential materials in their movement by sea’.<sup>26</sup> The protection of sea lines of communication (SLOCs) will therefore be an important task for the ADF in the next 15 years, again requiring small, highly-mobile capabilities conducting intelligence-led operations as part of a wider maritime strategy.

## **The US alliance**

A key implied national interest is serving Australia’s alliance with the US. While some critics of Australia’s relationship with the US believe ‘it is time we begin to cut ourselves off America’s coat-tails’,<sup>27</sup> successive governments from both sides of politics have continued to support strengthening engagement with the

US. The 2013 Defence White Paper describes the Australia-US alliance as the ‘most important defence relationship ... [which is] a pillar of Australia’s strategic and security arrangements’.<sup>28</sup> So it is unlikely that the fundamentals of Australia’s relationship with the US will change over the next 15 years, even if there is an unexpected period of relative peace.

An essential underpinning of the alliance is for the ADF to remain interoperable with the US military. To do this, the ADF must continue to invest in high technology and interoperable military equipment, as well as continuing to align with US tactics and procedures, and being proactive in seeking opportunities for engagement. Such engagement may include assisting in smaller campaigns and operations where the primary benefit to Australia is in aligning our military capability and tactics to contemporary operations, rather than necessarily achieving a specific national interest.

## **Operating with other arms of government**

Operating well with other arms of government is a further challenge. In 2009, then US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton introduced the term ‘smart power’ to describe the intelligent use of the full spectrum of national power as ‘picking the right tool, or combination of tools, for each situation’.<sup>29</sup> The need for applying both ‘soft power’ and ‘hard power’ has long been recognised but probably not with the level of integration that ‘smart power’ implies.

The impetus for ‘smart power’ came from the limited objective wars that followed the Second World War, with the Vietnam War an obvious example. Not only did that war have limited objectives, which required a combined approach between allies, but it also required the integration of disparate, civilian arms of government. However, according to Daniel Marston, the so-called ‘Pacification’ program in South Vietnam was initially the epitome of disunity—and that it was not until a single organisation was established to focus specifically on pacification that a coordinated and sustained effort began to take hold.<sup>30</sup>

The ADF needs to learn how to harness and coordinate the energies of different arms of government. To do this, it needs to be proactive in seeking opportunities for engagement, such as leading or participating in whole-of-government exercises aimed at practising a coordinated national approach. Conducting such exercises and operations would expose a new generation, both military warfighters and civilian decision-makers, to the planning and conduct of complex operations and campaigns.

## **Military capabilities**

Military capabilities provide the means with which the government can achieve its goals and requirements within the operational environment. It follows that any planning for the future of the ADF must examine aspects of these capabilities. Firstly, it must be acknowledged that when a new conflict arises, the ADF must adapt the force-in-being to the requirements of the conflict. Secondly, ADF capabilities will always be constrained by Australia’s limited population. Thirdly, capabilities will always be constrained by the available budget.

Given the lengthy procurement timeframes for complex military equipment, the ADF over the next 15 years will largely be utilising capabilities already in service, or capabilities that are in the process of being acquired.<sup>31</sup> The need to adapt and utilise the force-in-being is well illustrated by the British experience in the Falklands in 1982, where the Royal Navy carrier force was required to sail just three days after the invasion of the Falklands, enabling Britain to regain the strategic initiative.<sup>32</sup> The challenge for the ADF over the next 15 years is to ensure that it is adequately balanced, equipped, informed and ready to meet a range of limited-warning and limited-objective contingencies akin to the Falklands.

Lengthy procurement timeframes also impact the ability to rapidly ‘scale-up’. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and demise of the bipolar global system of the Cold War, allied forces no longer faced a short-warning threat of a Soviet large-scale offensive.<sup>33</sup> This, along with the trend towards urban warfare after the Cold War, led allied forces to prepare for high-end warfighting, on the assumption that a ‘scaled-down’ strategy could be used for lower-end operations.<sup>34</sup>

As technologically-advanced equipment is increasingly brought into service over the next 15 years, the challenge for the ADF will be to innovate, scale-down and adapt the use of this equipment to achieve a limited-objective mission within a likely lower-technology war.

## **The availability of people**

ADF capabilities will always be constrained by the availability of people. As a country with a relatively small population, Australia will only ever be able to field a relatively-small armed force in conflict—particularly in comparison to a number of the military forces emerging in the Indo-Pacific arc. Limitations on size further emphasise the need to compensate through superior training and technology.

This approach has been successful in past conflicts, such as the Korean War and the first Gulf War, both of which were military if not political victories. The challenge for the ADF over the next 15 years will be to find a balance between the size of the force and equipping and training the force adequately with advanced technologies. Too large a force wastes scarce human capital during peacetime and dilutes the availability of equipment, while too small a force undermines the credibility of the ADF to deter would-be attackers.

With the drawdown in Afghanistan, there is a risk that the ADF will lose experience and expertise—and may be under pressure to reduce its overall size. While any such reduction in force size is generally resisted by military forces, it could deliver some efficiencies. A smaller force has less organisational inertia and so is more likely to be able to adapt its training and capabilities to meet an evolving operating environment. A good example was the US Marine Corp's agility in adapting to the requirements of amphibious warfare in the Pacific theatre of the Second World War, much more effectively than the significantly larger US Army.<sup>35</sup>

For the contemporary ADF, a small force would minimise the capital investment in modern, ICT-dependent capabilities, which are often outdated by the time the capability is operational. Furthermore, personnel costs could be redirected towards ensuring that a smaller force receives superior equipment and training, while 'maintaining credible high-end capabilities ... to act decisively when required, and deter would-be adversaries'.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, the force size needs to be sufficiently credible to be of value to the US alliance, with bilateral talks in November 2012 reportedly suggesting that Australia 'is already at the margin of defence-spending viability'.<sup>37</sup>

Any plan to reduce the size of the ADF post-Afghanistan therefore needs to be carefully considered, planned and balanced against other priorities. Any force reduction should be concentrated in areas that are relatively easy to train (such as infantry), rather than areas that are difficult or costly to train (such as a submarine force). Any plan to reduce force size also requires a corresponding plan to mobilise forces should it become necessary, including an investment in collection and analysis of indicators and warnings to ensure that emerging crises are detected with sufficient warning time to mobilise an appropriately-sized force.

## **The budget**

Perhaps the most significant impact on capability is a constrained Australian budget. The 2014 budget confirmed that the Government is committed to a 'properly resourced' defence force and to an increased defence budget that equates to 2 per cent of GDP.<sup>38</sup> However, the planned increase to defence expenditure must be taken in the context of the Government's broader priority to return the national budget to surplus by 2024-25, in an environment of falling revenue.<sup>39</sup>

While Australian defence spending is already relatively low compared to other regional partners,<sup>40</sup> history suggests two trends that significantly impact defence spending. Firstly, Australian defence spending tends to fall in poor economic environments, such as the late 1930s, the late 1980s and since the 2008 global financial crisis. Secondly, 'Australia spends more on defence during time of war'.<sup>41</sup>

Given the context of a slowing economy and Afghanistan draw-down, it would be prudent to conclude that ADF spending will be constrained for the foreseeable future.<sup>42</sup> From a 'grand strategic' perspective, this may not be a bad thing. The strategic advantage that wealthy, liberal-democratic, maritime-trading

nations have typically enjoyed over their adversaries has been in being able to mobilise economic capacity in times of war.<sup>43</sup> The most striking historical example of this can be found in the Second World War:

[Where Japan] vastly underestimated the productive capacity of the United States. Japan started the war numerically superior in practically every category of military equipment... But once the great US industrial machine geared up, the Japanese found themselves inferior in all the various machines of war'.<sup>44</sup>

The Cold War further reinforced this idea but within a different paradigm. Both the US and Soviet Union were forced to adopt massive military budgets—but to finance a strategy of protracted deterrence rather than a short surge into warfare. According to Jonathon Kirshner, the Soviet Union lost the Cold War 'not because of military weakness but because ... its defense burden became onerous, it fell further behind technologically, and was unable to produce economic growth'.<sup>45</sup>

The strategy for the ADF for the next 15 years should centre on minimising force size for the greater strategic good of the Australian economy—but only to the extent that credible core capabilities can be maintained. Such capabilities need to be maintained in order to deter would-be aggressors, make a meaningful contribution to the US alliance, respond to limited warning crises, and provide a solid baseline force from which mobilisation can be enabled if required.

## Conclusion

This article has argued that the ADF needs to be careful when applying lessons from history to inform its future planning. It has selectively drawn lessons from history to highlight the characteristics required of the ADF for the next 15 years. These characteristics are shaped by the environment that the ADF can expect to operate in, the tasks the government-of-the-day expects the ADF to undertake, and the capabilities that are required to undertake these tasks.

The ADF needs to learn from but not be anchored by its experience from Afghanistan, and apply it within the context of the Indo-Pacific arc. It needs to understand and engage with future regional partners and adversaries, as well as contingency plan for a worst case scenario. The ADF must be designed for the defence of Australia and protection of SLOCs by generating mobile, long-range capabilities, enabled by ISR, to operate in the air-sea gap.

In designing its force structure for the defence of Australia and planning for high-end warfighting, the ADF needs to remain flexible, adaptable and willing to scale-down high-end warfighting capabilities to conduct broader, lower-intensity expeditionary operations within the region. The ADF must emphasise its traditional strengths of superior technology, training and interoperability to compensate for its inevitable small size—and must be willing to commit to minor operations for the learning experience rather than the fulfilment of a national interest.

Expertise must be built with other arms of government to develop a more coordinated and effective national approach to crises. With decreasing funding momentum, ADF resources are likely to come under further budgetary pressures. Minimising defence resource allocation during peace would allow the nation to focus on building economic strength, which would ultimately better enable the ADF for future contingencies.

Core capabilities need to be preserved during this process in order to maintain a credible deterrence effect, contribute to the US alliance, and provide a solid baseline from which to mobilise if required. Capabilities that are easy to raise and train could be reduced in size, which would decrease organisational inertia and increase agility. Finally, any reduction in force size would need an increased intelligence effort to assure sufficient warning time to achieve mobilisation in the event of a crisis.

Perhaps the most pertinent lesson from history for the ADF over the next 15 years is the requirement to remain flexible. A flexible ADF is central to compensating for the vagaries of prediction, and for adapting operational experience to the 'new' operating environment of the Indo-Pacific arc. Flexibility within the force will allow it to adapt to the task at hand, whether it be engaging future regional coalition partners in



peacetime, conducting scaled-down expeditionary operations across the region in limited war, or participating in high-end warfighting alongside the US.

Flexibility also facilitates working effectively within a diverse coalition, as well as with other arms of government, to achieve the optimal application of 'smart power'. Finally, flexibility affords the organisation maturity to accept any reduction in funding or force size during peacetime, with the conviction to maintain core capabilities as the basis for rapid mobilisation. As Michael Howard has asserted:

[W]hatever doctrine the Armed Forces are working on, they have got it wrong.... What does matter is their capacity to get it right quickly when the moment arrives. It is the task of military science in an age of peace to prevent the doctrine from being too badly wrong.<sup>46</sup>

Flexibility is the key to the ADF being not 'too badly wrong' over the next 15 years.

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## DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this article are the author's and do not necessarily reflect the views of the RAAF, the Department of Defence or the Australian Government more broadly.

## NOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> This is an edited version of a paper titled 'An essay on the future of the ADF' submitted by the author while attending the Australian Command and Staff Course at the Australian Command and Staff College at the Australian Defence College in 2014.
  - <sup>2</sup> Michael Howard, 'The Use and Abuse of Military History', *Royal United Services Institution Journal*, Vol. 107, 1962, p. 7.
  - <sup>3</sup> David Petraeus, 'Lessons of History and Lessons of Vietnam', *Parameters*, Vol. 16, No. 3, 1987, p. 44.
  - <sup>4</sup> Richards J. Heuer, *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis*, Center for the Study of Intelligence, CIA: Washington DC, 1999, p. 39.
  - <sup>5</sup> Heuer, *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis*, p. 40.

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- 6 Australian Government, *Strong and Secure: a strategy for Australia's national security*, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet: Canberra, 2013, p. 27.
- 7 Australian Government, *Defence White Paper 2013*, Defence Publishing Service: Canberra, 2013, p. 2.
- 8 Australian Government, *Defence White Paper 2013*, p. 10.
- 9 Australian Government, *Defence White Paper 2013*, p. 9.
- 10 Stanley Brogden, 'Strategic Air Command – The Passing of an Era', *Aircraft and Aerospace*, Vol. 72, No. 4, May 1989, p. 17; Tony Mason, 'The Domination of Confrontation', in Tony Mason (ed.), *Air Power: a centennial appraisal*, Brassey's: London, 1994, p. 82.
- 11 Adrian Lewis, 'Amphibious Doctrine: the British and American visions', in Adrian Lewis (ed.), *Omaha Beach: a flawed victory*, University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 2001, pp. 49-50.
- 12 Joseph Alexander, *Storm Landings: epic amphibious battles in the Central Pacific*, Naval Institute Press: Annapolis, 1997, pp. 12-4; Paul Kennedy, *Engineers of Victory: the problem solvers who turned the tide in the Second World War*, Allen Lane: New York, 2013, p. 309.
- 13 Hugh Smith, 'The Dynamics of Social Change and the Australian Defence Force', *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 21, No. 4, Summer 1995, p. 536. According to the 2007 Defence census, 87 per cent of all ADF personnel are Australian-born, compared with only 71 per cent of the general population. Only 1 per cent of ADF personnel are from Asia, compared with 6 per cent for the broader community: Anthony Bergin, 'Ethnic push could be a distraction', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 July 2009, available at <<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/ethnic-push-could-be-a-distraction-20090715-dlkb.html>> accessed 4 June 2014.
- 14 Graham Cosmas, *MACV: the Joint Command in the years of withdrawal, 1968-1973*, Center for Military History: Washington DC, 2007, p. 135.
- 15 Austin G. Long, *Deterrence: from Cold War to long war: lessons from six decades of RAND deterrence research*, Rand Corporation: Santa Monica, 2008, p. 74.
- 16 Australian Government, *Defence White Paper 2013*, p. 26.
- 17 Phillip Tetlock, *Expert Political Judgment: how good is it? How Can We Know?*, Princeton University Press: Princeton, 2009, p. 19. Tetlock is best known for his scientific analysis of more than 80,000 predictions by experts. The results were devastating, with experts performing worse than if they had simply assigned equal probabilities to possible outcomes.
- 18 As Kahneman surmised, 'in other words, people who spend their time, and earn their living, studying a particular topic produce poorer predictions than dart-throwing monkeys who would have distributed their choices evenly over the options': Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, Penguin: London, 2011, pp. 218-9.
- 19 Malcom J. Muir, 'A Failed Blockade: Air and Sea Power in Korea, 1950-1953', in Bruce A. Elleman and S.C.M. Paine (eds.), *Naval Blockades and Seapower: Strategies and Counter-Strategies 1805-2005*, Routledge: Abingdon, 2006, p. 144.
- 20 Mark Adkin, *Goose Green: a battle is fought to be won*, Leo Cooper: London, 1992, p. 35.
- 21 Mike Smith and Matthew Uttley, 'Military Power in a Multipolar World', in Andrew Dorman *et al* (eds.), *The Changing Face of Military Power: joint warfare in the expeditionary era*, Palgrave: New York, 2002, p. 4; John Andreas Olsen (ed.), *A History of Air Warfare*, Potomac Books: Washington DC, 2010, p. 183.
- 22 This has broadly been the case since the 1987 White Paper, which acknowledged that 'Australia's strategic circumstances were relatively benign': Smith, 'The Dynamics of Social Change and the Australian Defence Force', p. 533; Australian Government, *Strong and Secure*, p. 17.
- 23 Australian Government, *Strong and Secure*, p. 17.
- 24 Smith, 'The Dynamics of Social Change and the Australian Defence Force', p. 532.
- 25 Jonathon Kirshner, 'Political economy in security studies after the cold war', *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 5, No. 1, April 1998, p. 69.
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- 28 Australian Government, *Defence White Paper 2013*, p. 56.
- 29 Derek S. Reveron and James L. Cook, 'Developing Strategists: translating national strategy into theater strategy', *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Issue 55, 4th quarter 2009, p. 22.

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- 30 Daniel Marston, 'Vietnam War: military culture', lecture presented at the Australian Command and Staff College, Canberra, ACT, 22 May 2014.
- 31 Analysis of the 2012-13 Major Projects Report indicates that it takes an average of more than 11 years to procure a major capability and bring it into service within the ADF. This is based on an average project timeframe for the top 30 projects by value: Australia National Audit Office, *2012-13 Major Projects Report - Defence Materiel Organisation*, Report No. 12, Auditor-General's Office: Canberra, 2013-14, pp. 72 and 128.
- 32 Adkin, *Goose Green*, p. 35.
- 33 Mike Smith and Matthew Uttley, 'Military Power in a Multipolar World', in Dorman *et al*, *The Changing Face of Military Power*, p. 6.
- 34 Smith and Uttley, 'Military Power in a Multipolar World', p. 8.
- 35 Kennedy, *Engineers of Victory*, p. 312.
- 36 Australian Government, *Strong and Secure*, p. 17.
- 37 Peter Jennings, 'The US Rebalance to the Asia-Pacific: an Australian erspective', *Asia Policy*, No. 15, January 2013, p. 43.
- 38 Australian Government, 'Budget 2014-15 Overview', Department of Finance: Canberra, 2014, p. 29, available at <[http://www.budget.gov.au/2014-15/content/overview/download/Budget\\_Overview.pdf](http://www.budget.gov.au/2014-15/content/overview/download/Budget_Overview.pdf)> accessed 13 May 2014.
- 39 The budget overview notes that the proportion of traditional 'working age' population to support each person over the age of 65 will decline from 5:1 to 3:1 by 2050: Australian Government, 'Budget 2014-15 Overview', pp. 2-8.
- 40 By contrast, the US spends 4.7% of GDP on defence, Britain 2.6%, South Korea 2.5% and Singapore 3.6%: David Watt and Alan Payne, 'Trends in Defence expenditure since 1901', Parliament Research Paper, Parliamentary Library Service: Canberra, 2013-14, available at <[http://www.aph.gov.au/About\\_Parliament/Parliamentary\\_Departments/Parliamentary\\_Library/pubs/rp/BudgetReview201314/DefenceExpenditure](http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/BudgetReview201314/DefenceExpenditure)> accessed 30 May 2014.
- 41 Watt and Payne, 'Trends in Defence expenditure since 1901'.
- 42 Smith, 'The Dynamics of Social Change and the Australian Defence Force,' p. 533.
- 43 Kirshner, 'Political economy in security studies after the cold war', p. 76.
- 44 Herman Wolk, 'Sixty-Five Years on: plans and strategy to defeat Japan in World War II', *Air Power History*, Vol. 57, No. 3, p. 6.
- 45 Kirshner, 'Political economy in security studies after the cold war', p. 75.
- 46 Michael Howard, 'Military Science in the Age of Peace', *RUSI Journal*, Vol. 119, March 1974, p. 7.

# Evolution of the Battlefield: strategic and legal challenges to developing an effective cyber warfare policy

Sub Lieutenant Nam Nguyen, RAN

It is better to be vaguely right than exactly wrong.

Carvath Read, *Logic: deductive and inductive*, 1898 <sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, governments, businesses and individuals are increasingly reliant on information and communication technologies (ICT) for large transactions and to support critical national infrastructure. As much as this technology has made daily life more convenient, there is significant risk associated with these systems, not least because individuals, groups and state-sponsored actors (as well as states themselves) have found ways to manipulate or 'hack' into these systems to further their own objectives.

This, of course, has significant follow-up consequences on how ICT is used as part of a government's arsenal to protect its national interests. While it is important to consider the use of cyber capabilities more broadly in the context of national security, particularly their effects on international reputation and diplomatic relations, it is even more important to examine their potential effects when used in armed conflict, including their impact on the civilian populace and where loss of life may occur.

This article argues that significant work needs to be done in this area, especially since most developed states, including Australia, have insufficient publicly-available strategies and policy positions on dealing with cyber threats.<sup>2</sup> Policy makers and military planners must be aware that part of every conflict will take place in cyber space, which can be just as important, 'if not more so, than events taking place on the ground'.<sup>3</sup>

The article examines existing and potential cyber capabilities and how they may be used in armed conflict. Classic strategic thought provides some guidance. These maxims, however, only provide overall logic for how cyber warfare can be used to achieve policy aims. Moreover, the legality of cyber warfare actions are a point of contention among academics, policy-makers and military planners, with a number of grey areas as to 'when and how' cyber means may be employed in armed conflict.

Significant work has been done to alleviate this area of contention. The *Tallinn Manual* on the international law applicable to cyber warfare, produced by NATO's Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence (located at Tallinn, Estonia),<sup>4</sup> provides non-binding guidance on the use of cyber capabilities during armed conflict.<sup>5</sup> However, it only applies when it has been determined that an international armed conflict has commenced, leaving open the need to further develop broader and more general cyber laws applicable at an international level.

There are numerous cases where cyber means have been deployed in support of conventional operations, which can be particularly useful case studies for analysing the strategic and legal implications of cyber warfare. Developing potential scenarios and 'war gaming' their resolution can also be useful in giving analysts and practitioners the ability to explore a range of cyber warfare-related considerations. Unfortunately, this can prove difficult when experts in the field find it difficult to reach consensus on an exact definition of cyber warfare, as well as the capabilities involved, and the extent to which it can or should be considered a separate domain to land, sea and air.

## What is cyber warfare?

Clearly-defined concepts are useful for constructing propositions, theories and analytical frameworks.<sup>6</sup> One of the difficulties in developing an effective framework for cyber warfare doctrine is that its

definition is either incomplete or too broad. There also remains significant debate over what constitutes cyber warfare, beyond the cyber methods or the 'how-to' of achieving policy aims in cyberspace.<sup>7</sup> The 'pro-cyber war' camp claims that cyber space is a real domain and an unavoidable security issue, contending that governments and militaries should be ready for an eventual and unavoidable future cyber war. On the other hand, those on the 'anti-cyber war' side argue the threat has been overstated, overused and hyped for no reason, and that a distinct cyber war is unlikely.<sup>8</sup>

Even so, most involved in the debate are not working on a universal definition of 'cyber warfare'—let alone the related terminology—as illustrated by the following:

- 'Information war' is a 'confrontation between two or more States in the information space aimed at ... undermining political, economic, and social systems ... or mass psychologic [sic] brainwashing to destabilize society and State'.<sup>9</sup>
- A cyber attack is 'the premeditated use of disruptive activities, or the threat thereof, against computers and/or networks, with the intention to cause harm or to further social, ideological, religious, political or similar objectives; or to intimidate any person in furtherance of such objectives'.<sup>10</sup>
- 'Cyber power' is the ability to obtain preferred outcomes through the use of the electronically-interconnected information resources of the cyber domain.<sup>11</sup>
- 'Cyber warfare' is 'the use of network-based capabilities of one state to disrupt, deny, degrade, manipulate, or destroy information resident in computers and computer networks, or the computers and networks themselves, of another State'.<sup>12</sup>
- 'Cyber warfare' occurs 'when one country perpetrates a cyber attack against another country that would, to the reasonable person, constitute a State act of war'.<sup>13</sup>
- 'Cyber operations' include 'the protection of deployed networks and information systems' against an adversary using a cyber attack against Australia 'to deter, delay or prevent Australia's response or the ADF's deployment of forces. This would probably include the targeting of information systems, networks and broader support infrastructure perceived to be integral to the ADF's decision-making and warfighting capabilities'.<sup>14</sup>

These examples demonstrate the varied definitions of cyber operations and/or cyber attacks. The first, focusing on cyber operations in the information space between states, seemingly overlooks the involvement of non-state actors. Similarly, the first-mentioned definition of cyber warfare seems to focus too narrowly on computers and their networks. Others focus on particular critical components but none, for example, includes methods of attack.

Most people have a broad idea as to what can be done with cyber capabilities. The internet's imperfect design enables hackers to read, delete or modify information between computers. Additionally, the maze-like architecture of 'the web' allows those with malicious intent a degree of anonymity that is generally not available in physical attacks on infrastructure or persons, facilitating obscurity and a degree of deniability.<sup>15</sup>

There are, however, more provocative uses for these methods beyond causing inconvenience for political purposes. Cyber espionage has the same purpose as the traditional form of espionage, only now it can be conducted using illegal exploitation methods through the internet, networks, software or computers. Another method of cyber attack is a 'denial-of-service' attack, whose purpose is to deny the use of a computer or network, which can be achieved by flooding a target with superfluous data or physically destroying the computer's software.

A third type of cyber attack is data manipulation or sabotage. The most common means of conducting these attacks are through malicious software programs (malware), which can alter the code within computer networks and programs. Less severe forms of this method cause a degree of inconvenience, as was seen in late 2013 when Indonesian hackers defaced the Australian Secret Intelligence Service's public

website.<sup>16</sup> That, however, was a relatively benign example of cyber sabotage. Data modification can also be extremely dangerous because 'a successful attack can mean that legitimate users (human or machine) will make important decisions based on maliciously altered information', which could corrupt command and control systems or even allow the takeover of those systems.<sup>17</sup>

The potential to use cyber space as a medium to conduct warfare is clear. But defining what constitutes cyber warfare is considerably more problematic. Moreover, some would argue that developing a single definition of cyber warfare carries inherent risks, as 'focusing on one aspect of cyber space creates a strategic and conceptual blind spot.... It also has a tendency to focus consideration of risk via threats and vulnerabilities on transmission mechanisms'.<sup>18</sup>

Similarly, military planners may make the mistake of thinking of cyber warfare as merely a decisive, tactical and information-enabled force multiplier in the aid of conventional warfare.<sup>19</sup> Thus developing a concise definition of cyber warfare may actually restrict armed forces from being able to develop doctrine that is both effective in achieving the stated aims of government policy and flexible enough to allow military planners to develop ways to counter emerging threats.

## **War, doctrine and cyber policy**

Despite the lack of internationally-recognised definitions, there is sufficient material to be able to discern the unique characteristics of cyber warfare. Broadly speaking, these characteristics are speed, anonymity and flexibility of the systems. These characteristics can present a significant challenge because 'planning and preparing for a [cyber] attack may take weeks or more to develop ... but, once launched ... may well be over in a matter of seconds. Consequently, in many cases we may not realistically be able to react to an attack in progress'.<sup>20</sup>

Furthermore, rather than wearing down an adversary's defences, cyber warfare can be used to bypass conventional defences 'in order to penetrate the adversary's system and exploit it through speed and surprise'.<sup>21</sup> As was seen during the Russia-Georgia conflict in 2008, hackers were able to cripple Georgia's internet communications networks, which had significant flow-on consequences for Georgia's command and control capability.<sup>22</sup> While it can be expected that many states will similarly use cyber methods to shape the future battlespace, particularly against a technology-dependent adversary, the full potential of cyber warfare in armed conflict has arguably not yet been realised.<sup>23</sup>

Throughout history, whenever there has been a 'revolution in military affairs and technology', it has always been followed with a strategic effect.<sup>24</sup> The problem with the cyber warfare debate is that there are very few examples of how cyber means have been employed in support of and during armed conflicts. Even then, some of these examples have issues of attribution, such as the Stuxnet virus attack on Iranian nuclear facilities, which makes it difficult to study the full extent of this new mode of warfare.<sup>25</sup>

Perhaps an examination of the classic strategists, Carl von Clausewitz and Basil Liddell Hart, can provide some guidance on how best to perceive the threat of cyber warfare and how to use these new capabilities, thus assisting to develop appropriate doctrine and policy.

Adopting a Clausewitzian view of strategy will assist governments and military planners to determine what it is they wish to achieve and by what means they will measure their success.<sup>26</sup> Particularly as the vulnerabilities in cyberspace become apparent, understanding the underlying intent of such capabilities, and their purpose, can aid in determining their employment. Clausewitz also talks about the concept of an enemy's centre of gravity (and, as a consequence, one's own centre of gravity) as being the linkages that allow the enemy to wage war.<sup>27</sup>

Whichever definition is used, the essential element is the dominant characteristic (strength) of either party. In the case of cyber warfare, the more 'electronically dependent an actor is, the more vulnerable it is'.<sup>28</sup> Thus it would be prudent for military planners to examine their own weaknesses in order to determine how best to employ cyber means against an adversary.

The maxims of other classical strategic thinkers would point to a similar course of action. Liddell Hart describes strategy as the 'art of distributing and applying military means to fulfil the ends of policy'.<sup>29</sup> Helmuth von Moltke calls it 'the practical adaptation or the means placed at a general's disposal to the

attainment of the object in war'.<sup>30</sup> Like Clausewitz, however, these two definitions focus on the relatively narrow view of how military force can achieve a political aim. Given that the use of military force is rarely used in isolation, strategy in the modern context must be expanded to include other means.<sup>31</sup> As Robert Osgood suggests:

Strategy must now be understood as nothing less than the overall plan for utilising the capacity for armed coercion—in conjunction with economic, diplomatic, and psychological instruments of power—to support foreign policy most effectively by overt, covert, and tacit means.<sup>32</sup>

This definition provides a broader focus on power and the fundamental nexus between the military aspect and foreign policy goals. It also takes into account national objectives and acknowledges that strategy is not a purely militaristic endeavour. Along these lines, a 'grand strategy' for cyber warfare would encompass all aspects of national power in order to develop doctrine that can be employed by all arms of government.

## **The ethical dimension and the law of armed conflict**

The challenge in developing a clear and concise cyber strategy is determining the distinction between day-to-day security issues (such as managing cyber crime) and matters governed by the laws of armed conflict.

One document that provides comprehensive analysis of extant legal norms is the previously-mentioned *Tallinn Manual*. However, even though it provides some clarity on the application of international law to cyber conflicts, there are still key areas that require further discussion. For example, its editor concedes that 'crafting a consensus understanding of [the] definition of "attacks"... proved arduous'.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, the experts involved could not agree on what constitutes 'war-sustaining' military objectives for legitimacy of targeting.<sup>34</sup> This is particularly important when considering that an attack by cyber means could result in a response involving the use of kinetic weapons.<sup>35</sup>

Put simply, there is no clear guidance as to when states can respond to a cyber attack with armed force, notwithstanding what may seem to be clear examples of legitimate targets in the spectrum of cyber warfare. For example, in the Russo-Georgian conflict in 2008, Moscow presumably perceived Georgia's computer networks as legitimate targets because of their role in supporting attacks on Russian troops.<sup>36</sup>

This, however, is a 'neat' example of where a response can be considered lawful, as both actors were states operating in the context of an international armed conflict. The experts involved in the preparation of the *Tallinn Manual* suggested that states should consider the intended effect of a cyber operation; more specifically, they argued that the physical effects of a cyber attack, and whether it results in death or damage to civilian objects, should guide the appropriate response.<sup>37</sup>

As highlighted earlier in this article, there is also no clear definition of a cyber weapon. The *Tallinn Manual* does not specify what would constitute such a weapon, other than discussing its characteristics, nor does it make any definitive conclusions regarding them.<sup>38</sup> Despite this, the experts agreed that existing protocols of the Geneva Convention are sufficient to address the requisite procedures for assessing any new, cyber-related weaponry and their application in armed conflict, effectively rejecting any characterisation of the cyber domain as being subject to a discrete body of law that was yet to be developed.<sup>39</sup>

Perhaps a close study of some of the 'cardinal' principles of the law of armed conflict could provide some further guidance into the use of cyber weapons in armed conflict. Consider, for example, the principle of 'distinction', which relates to the capacity of weapons to distinguish between civilian and military targets.<sup>40</sup> In an opinion expressed in the International Court of Justice, Justice Rosalyn Higgins defined weapons that were unable to distinguish between civilian and military targets as 'blind'.<sup>41</sup> In the case of cyber warfare, it is conceivable that malware, for example, may be coded only to attack military objectives. On the other hand, the practitioners that developed the code could deliberately or otherwise overlook such fail-safes and create a cyber weapon that is effectively 'blind' in its targeting.

The principle of distinction also raises further strategic consequences worth considering in the cyber debate, apart from international humanitarian law concerns. The features of this new cyber domain, such

as the interconnectivity of computer networks, bring significant utility to states and societies during peacetime. Much of the development in ICT has been a result of business and industrial innovation, and the national security community has benefited from this immensely. Indeed, states should recognise the strategic importance of critical ICT infrastructure to national survival today, just as other forms of infrastructure did almost a century ago.<sup>42</sup>

During times of armed conflict, however, the ability to prevent significant collateral damage to the civilian population may be hampered by the interconnectedness of military networks and their reliance on civilian infrastructure.<sup>43</sup> During the 1990-91 Gulf War, for example, a coalition attack on Iraq's electricity grid successfully disrupted its military command and control networks; however, an unintended consequence was that the attack impacted the civilian population, including through its effect on emergency services.<sup>44</sup>

Anonymity in cyberspace is a further impediment to regulating cyber weapons and their use in armed conflict. While many commentators believe the Stuxnet virus could only have been developed by an organisation backed by considerable state-level resources,<sup>45</sup> no country or organisation has claimed responsibility for the attacks and computer forensic investigation has failed to conclusively attribute the virus to any state.<sup>46</sup> A further complication arises in the *Tallinn Manual's* assertion that 'the mere fact that a cyber operation has been launched ... from governmental cyber infrastructure is not sufficient evidence for attributing the operation to that State'.<sup>47</sup> This raises significant questions for those who fall victim to a cyber attack, and their right to an armed response in self-defence.<sup>48</sup>

Moreover, even if successful attribution of a cyber attack to a belligerent state (or state-sponsored group) is achieved, the fundamental principles of the law of armed conflict may prevent or complicate a cyber response. Heather Dinniss argues that armed force in self-defence is only a legitimate course of action if used to repel an attack when other non-forcible remedies have proven unsatisfactory.<sup>49</sup> Others argue that any response under the principle of military necessity should be made without undue delay, suggesting that even if states are able to identify where a cyber attack originated, the legality of an armed response may be jeopardised by the time it takes to launch a counter-attack.<sup>50</sup>

The potential strategic gains from cyber warfare may influence states to attempt to blur international humanitarian law and the law of armed conflict applying to cyber war. One solution that has been suggested is to adopt a consequence-based approach to cyber attacks, rather than attempting to apply the relevant international law.<sup>51</sup> This is because, as previously mentioned, not all malicious cyber activities can be considered 'armed attack'.<sup>52</sup>

Consider, for example, a hypothetical NATO-led bombing strike against a state-owned television station being used as a military communications centre.<sup>53</sup> The majority of the television station's day-to-day activities would likely be non-military and involve a number of civilians with no direct role in military activities. Hence, an airstrike aimed at knocking out the communications network would carry the risk of significant civilian casualties. However, a cyber attack could likely achieve the same endstate, with no risk of casualties or physical damage and minimal risk of international approbrium.

## **A global effort: towards a cyber treaty?**

A number of commentators have called for serious discussion to better delineate the line between cyber warfare and traditional warfare,<sup>54</sup> not least because 'cyber warfare is coming of age in an era where the Westphalian state order is undergoing vast transformation'.<sup>55</sup> Traditional ideas of borders and sovereignty only serve to complicate discussion and a truly international effort should be explored in order to ensure consensus over the issues discussed in this article.

Additionally, beyond the strategic and humanitarian considerations for developing a cyber warfare doctrine, the unique nature of cyber space must be taken into consideration. Cyber space transcends traditional boundaries and this fact only adds to the 'grey area' in this debate, particularly when determining the difference between cyber crimes and cyber attacks which could be interpreted as acts of war.

What arguably is required is an overarching international treaty regulating the use of cyber weapons in all instances, rather than just for internationally-recognised armed conflicts. Existing international laws



support coercive measures (though not armed attacks) in order to respond to economic wrongs and the violation of arms control treaties by states. So consideration should be given to extending these rules to the use of cyber weapons.<sup>56</sup>

In the economic domain, state responses to violations are known as ‘counter-measures’ and in the arms control domain they are called ‘sanctions’.<sup>57</sup> Both are coercive methods of enforcement which do not necessarily require the use of military force.<sup>58</sup> This is a particularly important consideration because useful lessons can be drawn from existing arms control treaties, such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Chemical Weapons Convention, to address how specific types of weaponry may or may not be used in both armed conflict and peacetime.<sup>59</sup> Having a separate cyber space or cyber weapons treaty could serve not only to clarify how these tools may be employed but also to maintain the viability of the cyber domain for peaceful purposes.

Not everyone in the international law community, however, supports the view that a distinct cyber treaty is required. Some argue that treaties are not the answer, and that norms regarding the use of cyber weapons should, and will, evolve through customary law, codes of conduct, and rules of engagement.<sup>60</sup> Others similarly suggest this is because states will actively ‘avoid prematurely limiting a weapon that could potentially offer some measure of non-lethality to conflict’.<sup>61</sup>

It has also been suggested that while a ban or treaty might be logical to prevent unforeseen consequences, its application may be unrealistic.<sup>62</sup> There are two reasons advanced in support of this argument. Firstly, many cyber capabilities and networks are dual-purpose and have peaceful utility for non-military purposes.<sup>63</sup> Secondly, a treaty may regulate the behaviour of states but will not necessarily prevent non-state actors from breaching the principles of the treaty. This is because smaller states and politically-motivated groups may seek to enhance their cyber capabilities as a force multiplier against more powerful opponents.

Perhaps a further barrier to developing a body of law that governs cyber warfare is the fact that the full effects of cyber weapons have not been seen. This has been a point of contention emphasised throughout this article. Unlike land mines or nuclear weapons (which ultimately led to the Ottawa Treaty and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty), it is difficult to assess where to draw the line in regulating cyber weaponry. One assessment of the difficulties in reaching consensus on an international cyber weapons treaty is that:

Visible or readily discernible state practice is still scarce. The military potential of computer network attacks is now only starting to be fully explored, and it is difficult to assess how realistic or likely the theoretical worst-case scenarios that are contemplated in the literature—for example, the manipulation of a nuclear power plant via cyber space—really are.<sup>64</sup>

Hence, there is obvious merit in pursuing internationally-accepted norms rather than trying to enforce an international treaty.<sup>65</sup> However, there are even greater risks associated with failing to develop an internationally-binding code or treaty on cyber space and cyber weapons as, without an overarching framework to guide states on the use of cyber weapons, the proliferation of even more devastating cyber weapons could become possible. Given that there is little agreement in relation to current capabilities, states and non-state actors and other groups may be driven to prepare for worst-case scenarios, or engage in tit-for-tat escalation, as occurred in the early days of the Cold War nuclear arms race.<sup>66</sup>

## **Conclusion**

In contemplating the future, analysts and theorists can debate worst-case scenarios and try to assess likely courses of actions by states. Perhaps a cyber attack that shocks the consciousness of humanity will prompt further insight into how best to regulate cyber weapons. The potential advantages of cyber warfare, however, may be an incentive for states to avoid developing a framework that is too restrictive.

This means that due diligence is required when proceeding with the development of cyber strategies and tactics. States need to consider the impact of this new form of warfare, not just from a legal and strategic perspective, but also because of the ethical implications of employing these means against civilians, protected persons and objects. It may be that cyber weapons will eventually become more prominent in armed conflicts. After all, the ability to achieve the same effects as kinetic weapons, without the

associated damage to objects or civilian casualties, will likely prove particularly enticing to decision-makers.

It is without question that more needs to be done to prepare for cyber space and how cyber weaponisation will affect international relations and warfare generally. A cyber attack on a nation's financial institutions would be disastrous. But the effects are potentially reversible. On the other hand, poor or untimely decisions by military practitioners and states using kinetic weapons may lead to unnecessary loss of life and other irreversible collateral damage.

The quote at the beginning of this article neatly summarises the dilemma that governments and military planners face moving forward in the cyber warfare debate. The *Tallinn Manual* and existing literature on the topic provides insight as to how cyber warfare may be used and regulated but there are limits to that guidance when used to develop policy. This raises significant legal, ethical and strategic questions to consider when determining the future application of cyber weapons.

Even the 'cardinal principles' of the law of armed conflict, and the guidance of classical strategic thinkers, do not provide a definitive answer. It is clear from the literature that there is no consensus on the way forward in terms of regulating the use of cyber weapons, particularly in relation to international humanitarian law. There are arguments in favour of international treaties and arguments that support the idea of international norms to regulate the use of cyber weapons in armed attacks. Future policies will need to address both sides of this debate.

Cyber weapons can prove useful for militaries in future but the aim should be to focus on minimising damage to civilians. Governments and military planners need to examine every facet of this new domain in a timely fashion to develop the most appropriate doctrine or policy. Failure to do so may result in a focused cyber attack that truly shocks the conscience of humanity.

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## NOTES

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# Predicting Future War <sup>1</sup>

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## Predicting the future operating environment

Throughout history, changes in the character of war have been difficult for contemporaries to identify, particularly during long periods of peace. While there may be trends and enduring principles of strategy and international relations, it is the variability of conditions, changes in the application of technology, adaptation and the dynamics of conflict that make prediction, and consequently planning, very challenging.

The problem of prediction has not prevented bold assertions, and some dystopian visions of the future have been propagated through sensationalist tracts and even, apparently, in serious scholarship. The modern prophets of doom who foresee a Hobbesian anarchy include such distinguished names as Robert Kaplan, Francis Fukuyama, Samuel B. Huntington and, albeit to a less apocalyptic extent, David Kilcullen.<sup>2</sup> Martin van Creveld and Philip Bobbitt suggest the state is in terminal decline in international affairs, opening the way for chaos and warfare.<sup>3</sup>

Others have claimed that war would be conducted 'amongst the people' with dire results in terms of civilian casualties, and the official UK military doctrine of 2009 on future character of conflict referred, in solely negative terms, to a 'hybrid' battlefield that would be inevitably 'contested, congested, cluttered, connected and constrained'.<sup>4</sup>

Works on global strategic trends tend to predict a violent future amidst diminishing natural resources, climatic pressures and global population growth. Nevertheless, such projections are starkly at odds with the conclusions of Steve Pinker, Andrew Mack and Håvard Hegre, specifically that war, both minor and major, is in decline.<sup>5</sup> Statistical work at Uppsala University, incorporating all the standard drivers of conflict since 1945, forecast a reduction in the number of wars and in the overall casualty toll in the next 50 years.<sup>6</sup>

In the past, attempts to predict the future of war were just as contradictory. It was always tempting for contemporaries to hold on to strongly-held values and force structures and to downplay unpalatable truths. The selection of preferred assumptions, rather than absolute truths, was a common problem. Nevertheless, some projections, dismissed as absurd by contemporaries, proved accurate in time. Selection, exaggeration, absurdity, contemporary fears and preferences, misunderstanding, and misplaced long-range forecasts were the characteristics of predicting future war in the past, and all these traits still dominate the present.<sup>7</sup>

There are many reasons why prediction is so difficult, even when there are apparently obvious positivist 'trends' to guide us. It is tempting to make projections in the present based on the types of wars that seem the most prevalent today and to assume that, for the foreseeable future, all wars will fall into this pattern. Military analysts want to identify the characteristics of future war with some accuracy, not least because expensive technological development programs depend on their judgments, training of specialists is long term and governments require success with the greatest efficiency.

The difficulty is that success is contingent on context. Clarity in what the objective is must be essential but the dynamics of war frequently change the conditions under which the conflict was entered. Aims, therefore, evolve just as rapidly and comprehensively as the conflict itself. Trends of the recent past give strong indications about war in the near future but still require caution. Failing states, international terrorism driven by radical ideologies, and a diminishing power of Western states to influence events or populations may characterise the immediate future.

However, the true value of history is not to invoke direct analogies, nor does the answer lie in trying to extract selections to suit a particular agenda, as so often occurs. The value of history is rather in encouraging critical reflection, to ask questions and to challenge the positivist assumptions that crowd

our field of view. We are subject to the flux of history, and we cannot entirely escape our present, but we should seek to break free of unreasoned supposition about the future through critical thinking.

## War and accelerating change

Recent assessments of the future operating environment have laid emphasis on trends visible in the present. The relative economic decline of the West in relation to the rise of Chinese manufacturing, a phenomenon not necessarily inevitable in the future, has given rise to the assumption that the world will become more multipolar. Given the brevity of the American unipolar moment after the Cold War, multipolarity is hardly surprising but its association with the relative economic decline of the West is illogical: it is not automatic.

Indeed, the rising military potential of China and ambiguity over Beijing's long-term plans, referred to with such regularity and suspicion that confrontation now amounts to an accepted, inevitable condition, may never occur at all, even in the Pacific.<sup>8</sup> China provides peacekeeping forces to the UN and is primarily focused on its domestic security. Fears of its cyberwarfare potential often fail to take any account of the Chinese Government's desire to monitor domestic sedition. The People's Republic of China is particularly sensitive about its border integrity, not an unreasonable attitude given threats to its frontiers in 1950, 1960, 1962 and 1979. Most important of all, China is restrained in its ambition by its interdependence with the West and the global economy. It is reliant on markets, as well as the quiescence of its domestic population.

A second assertion is that legal frameworks for Western operations will become less flexible and military officers express a fear they will be too constrained to manoeuvre at all in the future.<sup>9</sup> Legal advisors are vital in low-intensity operations among the people and in counterterrorism but would have less bearing on high-intensity campaigns. Indeed, it should be noted that legal advice in Western countries has tended to facilitate rather than obstruct operations. The real obstacle is risk-aversion and fear of 'juridification' of operations at the strategic and policy-making level. Concerns are expressed, for example, about psyops, surveillance and targeting, even though these are intrinsic to counterterrorism.

A third assertion is that future operating environments are forecast as urban, with rapid population growth exerting impossible strain on infrastructure and resources. A further complication is that climatic change is regarded as the catalyst for a greater incidence of natural disasters, particularly affecting coastal cities, and Western forces could find themselves in devastated regions. Resource crises, an assumed trigger for war, are foreseen as reaching an acute stage when energy demands begin to exceed supply or available reserves, and the first to be affected, it is thought, would be cities teeming with impoverished populations.

Significant adjustments are indeed likely but, in fact, these will be driven by the market: as costs become too great, consumers and states will be forced to switch to alternatives, and war may not always be the result. Mapping the choke points of demand and supply, and the relative power of cities, states and non-state actors might produce some correlation with future conflict; however, these correlations cannot be regarded as deterministic.

The most accurate assessments of war in the near future are informed by the present. These foresee large insurgent movements, operating across rural and urban areas, deeply enmeshed in local politics and enjoying the sympathy if not the support of their populations. Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia have been characterised as large-scale Western military interventions that antagonised local people, threatened vested interests and were marked by hasty or badly-aligned ends, ways and means. Even if deliberate intervention is not the intention, it is possible that, in the near term, attempts to bring humanitarian relief to a population in the midst of civil war, or a peacekeeping mission gone awry, could produce similar complications and obligations.

Since American conventional capability is so overwhelming and a nuclear exchange is so unthinkable, many believe *all* future adversaries of the West will wage irregular or unconventional warfare. Some assert that proxy warfare will be more common.<sup>10</sup> Some proxies might not be conventional military forces but may range from private military companies to transnational corporations and financial institutions.

The terrorist attack of 11 September 2001 in the US suggests that future attacks will be directed at specific weak points of the West. Their targets, such as civilian populations, embassies and infrastructure, are invariably non-military but, in fact, these vulnerabilities are exactly what Western armed forces need to address not least because civilian agencies lack the capability to protect them. In tackling these weaknesses, a radical reappraisal of the role and function of armies is probably required, along with a new appreciation that the future operating environment is as likely to be in the domestic sphere as overseas.<sup>11</sup>

Anxiety about Western vulnerabilities has produced a great deal of speculation about e-warfare, counter-terrorism scenarios, inter-robotic battles and the future of unmanned air power to conduct standoff attacks. The problem is these may not characterise future war, even if they are reassuringly predictable for their advocates and critics. Western military analysts are eager to identify the patterns with which they are familiar, even where they tend to select and exaggerate the threats and ignore future opportunities. Much of this is cultural. Clausewitzian notions of decisiveness, the politics of decision and rapid results are deeply attractive, even though war can be, in essence, indecisive, protracted, dynamic and unpredictable.

One current characterisation of war, we observe, is of increasing digitisation, with an emphasis on the metrics of targeting, firing, surveillance and effects. The steady evolution of this phenomenon has been overshadowed by recent debates about counterinsurgency techniques. Nevertheless, the issues are closely related for, at the tactical level, insurgents endeavour to overload these superior systems by multiple firing points or various forms of attack, including suicide bombers. Special Forces teams are still required to carry out close surveillance to enable the computerised weapons to engage and they often need to be concealed inside populations or recruit local auxiliaries, employing men using a high degree of empathy and understanding of the needs of non-state actors and their agendas.<sup>12</sup>

Despite attempts to eliminate friction with new technologies for countering terrorism and insurgency, human personnel and their high-tech systems are still vulnerable to exhaustion, technical failure and erroneous decisions taken by tired, stressed and scrutinised commanders. Information 'fog' may be less of an obstacle in conventional warfare but insurgents try to subvert Western information systems, confuse, obscure and remain concealed. The high-tempo of conventional war suits the technological systems of Western forces but periods of protracted warfare among populations do not, because here friction reasserts itself more powerfully.

The assumption, much repeated, is that Western operations in the future will be expeditionary since there is no existential state threat to the US or the European continent. Those who wish to avoid the protracted character of land warfare, like that in Afghanistan, speak of the need for air and sea operations or, at the very most, a light force structure. Advocates of such a posture rarely acknowledge the limitations of air power that were exposed as recently as operations in Kosovo. Navalists, eager to emphasise the way governments could maintain their freedom of action but not become embroiled in land campaigns, give less attention to the vulnerabilities of sea power in congested littorals or the fact that decision in war in the past occurred on land just as much as at sea. Those who envisage light forces engaging in peacekeeping seem not to have considered the consequences of these missions going wrong, resulting in severe fighting and the risk of catastrophic defeat.

The logic of a light footprint in Western expeditionary warfare in 2001-03 was to remain agile, minimise the burden of logistics and avoid the antagonism of local people with any overt and large-scale military presence. The US sought specifically to avoid any idea of occupation in Afghanistan to prevent a repetition of the Soviet mistakes in 1979. In 2001, there was considerable faith in the ability of air power to deliver solutions without a substantial ground commitment.<sup>13</sup> In fact, the logic of smaller ground forces means greater vulnerability and less intelligence which can only be compensated by a greater reliance on air power.

Yet, despite the advent of precision strike and enhanced targeting, reliance on air power has caused higher civilian casualties. This approach proved counterproductive in the militarised policing operations Western forces subsequently found themselves involved in. Air power alone could not provide security for the establishment of a new government. Since operations against Libya (2011), there has again been enthusiasm for air operations that avoid a ground commitment, and limited missile strikes were advocated against the Syrian regime in 2013. It has taken some time for Western powers to realise that



not only their methods of warfighting and stabilisation, but also their campaign design and doctrines, cannot be treated as immutably superior, and they have been forced to change constantly as operations unfold.

New technologies, from unmanned aerial vehicles to robotics, and new methods such as cyber denial of service or disruption, do no more to guarantee victory than did the faith in air and sea power in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The novelty of a technology has never ensured success in its own right—it is the integration of innovation into effective methods and means that gives a strategic or tactical edge. This has been the case particularly with the ability of unmanned aircraft to strike with missiles. Debate has raged on the character, legal and ethical, of targeted killing within states not at war with the West, such as Yemen and Pakistan, of temporarily removing insurgent fighters from the battlefield by extra-legal incarceration, and extraordinary rendition of suspected fighters.<sup>14</sup>

The fact remains that the enemies of the West subvert Western laws of armed conflict; they attack while concealed by the local civilian population, do not adhere to the truth in their information operations and declare their intention is to inflict mass casualties on those who do not conform to their ideas. The Western concern to protect populations, deeply internalised from the advent of massed air bombardment in the world wars, is not the priority for many non-Western belligerents. Disturbing and unpalatable though it may be for the West, the fact is that intimidation, fear of reprisals and overwhelming military power have all too often swayed a population into compliance, rather than the selective ethical targeting so treasured by Westerners.<sup>15</sup>

Nevertheless, inconsistencies can also be exploited. Drone strikes without a clear framework of the rules of engagement erode the boundaries between war and peace still further and make it easier for non-state groups to assert that they too possess the right to strike back in an international setting. Urban and marginal environments where government control is not assured clearly present the greatest problems for security forces and, at times, the military may assume a temporary role as governing authority with legal powers. Western armies find the thought of internal security less attractive than conducting war beyond their national borders.

Domestic security is regarded as a form of policing, rather than a military activity. The unhappy history of internal security and coercing of populations, while the traditional role of armies before the 19<sup>th</sup> century, can seem anathema to military professionals. Yet more emphasis needs to be placed on the objective of getting adversaries to the negotiating table as the parameter of success, seeing negotiation as normative, rather than the exceptional total war concept of military victory through the destruction of the means to resist.<sup>16</sup> Treating war as an extension of politics means that victory is the correlation of ends, ways and means, and it is a continuous process, not an end-state.

Above all, the inability to predict the future confidently might help explain the current desire to seek out the new while retaining the familiar in future war planning. Nevertheless, in the future operating environment, both old and new concepts of war will coexist. While some adversaries will use new weapon systems and information operations, some will attack infrastructures and attempt to mobilise populations using ideological grievances. But others will physically dig trenches and fight at close quarters. There will be no template for prediction, for every conflict will have its own context.

Finding patterns is common in future war discourse, and the anxieties of the present are usually projected onto the future in exaggerated terms.<sup>17</sup> Less sensational assessments are not so appealing, attract less attention and, if unfulfilled, are held up as exemplars of complacency. Longer term historical trends are difficult to identify: one cannot be quite sure if the trend identified is the correct one. Moreover, it is impossible to ignore the type of wars in the present. It appears that the world is, for now, in a period of unconventional conflict. Projections are made against this established pattern, which explains why those seeking to demonstrate through statistics a decline in war in the future feel as confident as the doomsayers.

The inherent contradictions of these analyses suggest that, in fact, there is no guarantee that patterns and trajectories are reliable. It is not inevitable that the low-intensity, unconventional warfare of today will continue even into the near future. It is possible that episodes of intense and highly-destructive interstate war, perhaps including a limited exchange of tactical nuclear weapons, will occur.

Moreover, as David Kilcullen points out in his recent *Out of the Mountains: the coming age of the urban guerrilla*, it is not so much that the trends of change are unfamiliar and unpredictable as the *rate* of those changes.<sup>18</sup> He argues that existing institutions, states, governments and military forces will be overwhelmed by the scale of unrest in new megacities and the tempo of new connectivity. In particular, he argues the future operating environment will be cities rather than states, with future conflicts likely centred on the periphery of sprawling coastal conurbations in the developing world, where non-state armed groups such as drug cartels, street gangs and warlords compete for resources and influence.

Failing states would be the dominant feature of the future, and Kilcullen develops the idea to suggest that states will struggle to govern megacities. Furthermore, Kilcullen illustrates how modern connectivity, such as the internet, mobile phones, satellite technology, Google Earth and social networks, presents both challenges and opportunities in this new operating environment. These tools can mobilise demonstrators as in the Arab Spring, maintain an unofficial economy in Mogadishu, train unskilled soldiers and armourers, and be employed by school children to identify the position of regime snipers in Libya. This connectivity comes into play at both local and global levels and will overload conventional military forces and government institutions.

By advancing a theory of what will be new in the operating environment, one can lose sight of continuities. While cities will potentially be the seedbed of popular unrest, it is also the case that urban areas are dependent on their hinterlands. The point is that cities can be bypassed and contained as well as being a battlespace. They are interdependent on other cities, ports, transport infrastructure and their environs, and that means the city system, as Kilcullen describes it, consists not only of the built-up environment but of the supporting networks that serve it. Moreover, one needs to acknowledge the importance of ideologies and legal aspects of the operating environment, since constraints on security forces are highly likely if they are to confront a Mumbai-style terrorist swarm attack, mass contamination or low-intensity operations against an aggrieved, poor population taking violent action against their deprivation.

Kilcullen reiterates historic anxieties about resources, threats and reputations that are unlikely to disappear as causes of war. It is likely that the ends of war will remain predictable, while ways and means will be transformed significantly. Yet, alongside these changes, traditional modes of war will remain. The use of force as an instrument of policy, which seems inevitable, can still be stratified into limited war, the threat of *guerre a l'outrance* (in terms of weapons of mass destruction) and attempts to neutralise an enemy by the defeat of his strategy. Nevertheless, new means during the century may open up new possibilities or new ways of achieving strategic ends.

Rather than a singular global crisis in the future, clashes of resources and population pressures will vary by region.<sup>19</sup> Some crises, through their sheer scale, may accelerate rapidly. The limited supply, exhaustion or increased costs of extraction of resources such as energy, water and food will also vary and affect the developing world more adversely than the developed. The *Global Environment Outlook* of 1999 predicted conflict over water in North Africa and the Middle East between 2000 and 2025, though ideological and governance issues still predominated in those regions midway through that forecasted period.<sup>20</sup>

Financial pressures have also proved far from isotropic: the lack of credit in less developed countries leaves them vulnerable to popular unrest. Inequality and youth unemployment are widely predicted to rise over the next 30 years and there may be a corresponding rise in disaffected groups willing to take violent action. Nevertheless, there is a risk of exaggeration: terrorist attacks on infrastructures are short-lived and are unable to destroy entire systems. The true vulnerability of the West would be exposed by the economic collapse of China through some mass social unrest and a global stagnation in trade and financial exchange.

The digital revolution promises to increase global GDP far faster and more extensively than the Industrial Revolution. The acceleration of technological change is likely to produce significant benefits as well as detrimental outcomes. If sequencing a human genome in 2000 took several years and \$50 million, today it can be achieved in a day at a cost of less than a \$1,000.<sup>21</sup> This advanced medical research provides the US with a significant strategic edge in global relations. The same is true of the ongoing information revolution. More information is generated every two days than the last 2000 years combined.<sup>22</sup> The implication is that grievances will be amplified faster and to a larger audience than before but solutions

may also be faster to acquire. This possibility suggests there will be greater volatility across informational, physical, infrastructural and ideational domains.

## **Trends of future war**

The character of war in the future will change as frequently as it has in the past but there will be many striking continuities, including terrorism and violent mass protest movements. There will almost certainly be a significant increase in irregular warfare in cities and systemic warfare. There are ten trends of future war: irregular warfare in urban areas exploiting infrastructural vulnerability; porosity; dispersal; depth; stealth; miniaturisation of combat power; privatisation of violence; devolution; nodal systemic operations, and precision.

In large cities, low-intensity terrorism could be much more likely. Protracted conflicts require significant military and police manpower and surveillance commitments, and managed media operations. In future war, urban militias may be able to access more lethal weapons, including surface-to-air missiles, anti-armour weapons and contaminating chemical or biological weapons. In urban warfare, military forces would find civil authority collapsing, multiple agencies working in the same spaces with their own agendas, and a vulnerable civilian population expecting relief.

Systemic warfare is just as unconventional, involving attacks on financial systems, the deliberate hollowing out of local economies to create dependent regions and peoples, diffused and mass participation in anti-state, anti-government activity, information operations, cybercrime, cyber blockades, disruptive electronic warfare, selective bio-attacks on sections of society, outages in energy generation and supply, or contamination of food and water. Each type of assault is characterised by an emphasis on the systemic nature of the consequences: they are designed to disrupt, degrade, discredit or destroy systems on which a state or a people depend.

The process of diffusion has affected the battlefield since the beginning of the industrial age as more lethal weapons of greater precision and range have extended it in depth. Where Gettysburg was fought within the compass of a few miles in 1863, the Second World War was characterised as a conflict extending across a variety of theatres around the globe, requiring the mobilisation of domestic economies and their populations. Since 1945, unconventional wars as well as overt, conventional wars have affected the entire globe. The interconnected nature of the world economy and communications systems means that even the smallest terrorist act is broadcast to all the world's population.

Closely linked to the idea of dispersal is concealment or stealth, with small organisations operating out of sight or attempting to remain concealed within populations or remote terrain. Interestingly, despite assertions that clandestine organisations are particularly threatening to the West, digital signatures are increasingly difficult to conceal. Modern state forces are even more exposed and vulnerable, and in the future camouflage in conflicts among the people will require complete blending.

Since the Industrial Revolution, precision engineering has facilitated smaller and more effective weapons systems, while advances in physics and chemistry have increased their explosive power. Concurrently, it has been possible to manufacture platforms that are smaller yet deliver the same or greater combat power. Machine guns, once large and cumbersome, became hand-held. After the first atomic bombs, new generations of nuclear weapons were designed until it became possible to manufacture a device as small as a nuclear artillery shell. In the near future, it is possible to envisage weapon systems of significant magnitude that can be carried by individuals. The deduction of this trend is that every city, port and province is a potential battlespace.

Warfare is likely to be individualised further in the near future as smaller and smaller groups assert the right to wage war, equipped with significant combat power. The increasing numbers of private security contractors and private military companies, in both domestic and overseas security tasks, is a trend likely to continue. Such a phenomenon makes the conduct of proxy warfare easier, with deniable groups and individuals trained and equipped by both states and non-state actors. Assamese irregulars, Mexican drug cartels, Somali pirates, and fighters from the Nigerian delta have mounted sustained campaigns against governments, international interests and large companies on their own terms.

The diffusion of power and communications since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in the West, and which have now straddled the globe, are reflected in new modes of making war. The development of technology and communications, which was also once the preserve of the elite and the state, has passed into the hands of the population and has become a key enabler for irregular movements. Devolution has also empowered state forces: handheld radio and mobile communications enable small teams and even individuals to enjoy enhanced situational awareness, to locate targets and to manoeuvre. Increasing specialisation means greater connectivity; interoperability and devolution are essential for efficient delivery of effect.

Technological developments continue to enhance precision and the overwhelming power with which to conduct stand-off attacks with considerable effect. More precise means of war in the future will nevertheless require more 'technician-warriors', able to wield these devices both in defence and offence, such as new generations of anti-missile technology and semi-autonomous vehicles. There will need to be multi-use platforms, able to operate on land, sea and air, and electronically, and there are likely to be smaller numbers of highly-trained, well-equipped and versatile Special Forces, whose vulnerability will be compensated by a range of support options (in transport, intelligence, fires, expertise and logistics).

But in all these state operations, the emphasis will be on greater precision alongside concealment, dispersion and adaptation to the threats of clandestine attack posed by non-state or proxy forces. New systems will necessarily be needed to operate with precision underground, in urban spaces, in high-rise buildings, underwater and in space. For the future, forces will need even greater accuracy and, more importantly, greater speed of target acquisition than at present to be able to destroy terror forces located or operational within populations.

The ability to inflict nodal or systemic degradation of an enemy's capacity to resist, command or communicate will be a feature of future war, involving the paralysis of communications, greater emphasis on informational-psychological, cyber and, in the future, even neurological warfare. It will represent a form of stealthy, deniable e-envelopment. These modes will be part of a wider array of operations against the principal threats of enemies situated within domestic populations.

## **Implications for contemporary armed forces**

Deductions are difficult and, in a short article, necessarily selective. Nevertheless, brevity and trenchant assertions can provoke critical thought and it is through informed exchanges that we may challenge assumptions, refine our conclusions and remain alert to misconceptions. In this spirit, the following concluding thoughts are offered.

Future forces will make use of stealth, systemically operating through communications networks and through the exploitation of the vulnerabilities of society. They will use information warfare to spread fear and panic but also wage kinetic warfare on and among civilian populations. Their aim will be to destroy financial systems, infrastructure and the willingness to sustain resistance. This unconventional warfare will be more frequent than the sustained, high-intensity wars of the past, although these too may still occur. The weaponisation of space appears to be imminent.

To meet these threats, states have to identify their own vulnerabilities and take steps to address them, even if this means the reorganisation of their armed forces. Preparation for this diffused, dispersed, devolved warfare of the future will also mean new civil defence measures. In the future, anti-terror conflict, information and psychological warfare will be essential. Peacetime preparation is likely to blur with protracted, sometimes domestic, internal security operations, peacekeeping and counterinsurgency or counterterror missions. Armed forces will probably be deployed on the receipt of specific intelligence in highly mobile and exceptionally rapid operations. Attacks will resemble raids. Intelligence will be the mainstay of operations but targets of opportunity will also become available fleetingly and will need a fast and precise response to exploit. Intelligent application of tactical concepts will be vital but so will closer liaison with a variety of civilian agencies.

The current trends of war are an incomplete guide to the future operating environment but they give some shape to its likely direction. The themes of porosity; dispersal; depth; stealth; miniaturisation of combat power; privatisation of violence; devolution; precision; nodal systemic operations, and infrastructural vulnerability will occur in a variety of domains—physical, infrastructural, ideational and

informational, especially with regard to cities and systems. The grammar of war, in these areas, has changed.

Understanding cities and their hinterlands, their morphology, connections and vulnerabilities gives the future commander an important advantage, whether they are directing regular, irregular or proxy forces. Understanding the new connectivity of systems, be they electronic, urban, resource-based or informational, will determine military literacy in the future. Military forces will be forced to adapt to the new environment or face defeat. One way to improve the ability to adapt is to emphasise the importance of innovation, improvisation and adaptation, and use the past as a critical guide for educational development and institutional change.

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## NOTES

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- 1 This is an edited version of an article by the author, with the same title, published in *Parameters (The US Army War College Quarterly)*, Vol. 44, No. 1, Spring 2014, pp. 65-76 (© 2014 Robert A. Johnson). It is reprinted with kind permission of *Parameters*.
  - 2 Robert D. Kaplan, 'The Coming Anarchy', *The Atlantic*, February 1994, available at <<http://www.theatlantic.com/ideastour/archive/kaplan.mhtml>>; Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Free Press: New York, 1992; Samuel B. Huntington, *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*, Simon and Schuster: New York, 1996; David Kilcullen, *Out of the Mountains*, Hurst & Co.: London, 2013.
  - 3 Martin van Creveld, 'The Fate of the State', *Parameters*, Vol. 26, No. 1, Spring 1996, pp. 4-18; Philip Bobbitt, *The Shield of Achilles*, Penguin: New York, 2003.
  - 4 Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force*, Allen Lane: London, 2005; Ministry of Defence, *The Future Character of Conflict*, Ministry of Defence, Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre, Strategic Trends Programme: London, 2 February 2010, available at <<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-character-of-conflict>>
  - 5 Steve Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: why violence has declined*, Viking Books: New York, 2011; Andrew Mack, 'More Secure World' lecture at the Australian National University, February 2011; Håvard Hegre *et al*, 'Predicting Armed Conflict, 2010-2050', *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 55, No. 2, 2013, pp. 1-21.
  - 6 See <<http://www.prio.org/Data/Armed-Conflict/UCDP-PRIO/>>
  - 7 See Antulio J. Echevarria II, *Imagining Future War: the West's technological revolution and visions of wars to come 1880-1914*, Praeger: New York, 2007.
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  - 9 Akbar Ahmed, *The Thistle and the Drone: how America's war on terror became a global war on tribal Islam*, Brookings: New York, 2013.
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- 12 Diane E. Davis and Anthony W. Pereira (eds.), *Irregular Armed Forces and their Role in Politics and State Formation*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2003, pp. 149-77; Austin Long, 'Going old school; US Army Special Forces return to the villages', *Foreign Policy*, 21 July 2010, available at <[http://afpak.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/07/21/going\\_old\\_school\\_us\\_army\\_special\\_forces\\_return\\_to\\_the\\_villages](http://afpak.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/07/21/going_old_school_us_army_special_forces_return_to_the_villages)>; Charles Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2003, p. 19.
- 13 D. M. Drew, 'US Airpower Theory and the Insurgent Challenge: a short journey to confusion', *Journal of Military History*, Issue 62, 1998, pp. 809-32.
- 14 Kenneth Roth, 'What Rules Should Govern US Drone Attacks?', *The New York Review*, 25 March 2013, pp. 16-8.
- 15 The best documented and most comprehensive use of terror against insurgency include the Bolshevik annihilation of White resistance in the Russian Civil War and the Nazi destruction of French resistance activities in central and southern France during the Second World War.
- 16 Richard Hobbs, *The Myth of Victory: what is victory in war?*, Westview: Boulder, 1979.
- 17 Change in human history has been, hitherto, incremental with periodic and episodic 'shear events' that are subsequently interpreted as turning points. For Clausewitz and Jomini, the great turning point of their age was the French Revolution but, for many in military history, these moments were identified either as decisive battles, as technological breakthroughs, or the achievements of particular commanders. Such determinisms were challenged in mainstream history and social science but seemed to enjoy a greater longevity in military studies. See Jeremy Black, *Rethinking Military History*, Routledge: London, 2004.
- 18 David Kilcullen *Out of the Mountains: the coming age of the urban guerrilla*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2013.
- 19 In recent work by McKinsey and Company, demographic shifts and the rise of emerging markets will, they argue, place strain on global resources to an unprecedented level. Food prices will increase by 40 per cent by 2030 and there will be a 30 per cent gap in energy supply and demand for oil and gas. There is likely to be a gap of some 40 per cent between supply and demand for water. Global meat intake will increase, placing pressure on available land. See McKinsey Global Institute, 'Urban World: cities and the rise of the consuming class', McKinsey Global Institute: Washington DC, June 2012, available at <[http://www.mckinsey.com/insights/urbanization/urban\\_world\\_cities\\_and\\_the\\_rise\\_of\\_the\\_consuming\\_class](http://www.mckinsey.com/insights/urbanization/urban_world_cities_and_the_rise_of_the_consuming_class)>
- 20 Michael T. Klare, *Resource Wars: the new landscape of global conflict*, Metropolitan Owl: New York, 2001. The states most vulnerable to conflict are Somalia, DR Congo, Sudan and South Sudan. Areas at significant risk are Chad, Yemen, Afghanistan, Haiti, Central African Republic, Zimbabwe, Iraq, Cote d'Ivoire, Pakistan, Guinea, Guinea Bassau and Nigeria.
- 21 McKinsey's presentation at Oxford University, 28 November 2013.
- 22 McKinsey's presentation, 2013.

# Workplace Flexibility in the ADF: anathema or panacea? <sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

Discussions about 'flexible work' in Defence have brought with it questions about what 'work', rather than 'service', looks like within the organisation. Yet what 'flexibility' means for Navy, Army and Air Force members, what 'flexible work' looks like, and what its implications are for capability remain contested. Assessing members' understanding of flexibility and members' consideration and access to specific individual flexible work practices is a base-lining activity that provides a foundation to inform the way workplace flexibility is further developed and practised within the ADF.

The 2009 and 2013 Defence White Papers both emphasised the importance of strategic reform around personnel to ensure sustainable Defence capability.<sup>2</sup> Essentially, the White Papers recognised that Defence has a structural supply chain problem with regards to external pressures such as labour market fluctuation, operational tempo, operation type, regional politics and events, and global financial issues. All of these complicate the issue of workforce management in an organisation that prides itself on (and requires) growing and keeping its own.

There is recognition too that cultural issues challenge Defence's positioning as an 'employer of choice' in an increasingly-competitive labour market. Assessments of how gender factors within the organisation, as well as reviews into other aspects of Defence, have provided evidence suggesting there is a need for cultural change.<sup>3</sup> Discussion and debate emerging from critiques about workforce supply, gender, wellbeing and work-life balance (among other things) are often distilled down to one dominant discourse: flexibility.

This article presents empirical evidence from one component of the 'Workforce and Work Design Analysis' research project undertaken by Project SUAKIN as part of a larger workforce reform project. Overall, the study found that differences, such as Service, gender, rank and work-site type, need to be accounted for and should not be minimised in seeking a 'one-size' approach to understanding and applying flexibility across the Services.

The findings are contextualised in broader literature on working flexibly, both in organisations outside of the military and for the ADF specifically. The lenses of *work*, *worker* and *workplace* are used to show the implications of the findings and to assess whether flexibility is an anathema or a panacea for the structural and cultural challenges faced by the ADF.

## Background

### *Understanding 'flexibility'*

Most commonly, the ways in which organisations and individuals talk about workplace flexibility are categorised into either formal or informal flexible work arrangements (FWAs). However other common ways of understanding or defining workplace flexibility include *individual*, *organisational*, *numerical* and *functional* flexibility, and they are underpinned by a variety of motivating factors and access dependencies, as summarised at Table 1.

**Table 1: Framework for understanding flexibility**

Categorisations of 'flexibility'	<p><b>Formal</b> FWAs include codified and endorsed structures, policies and procedures that enable an organisation to provide other than full-time, permanent work options to its personnel, such as part-time and contract work.<sup>4</sup></p>
	<p><b>Informal</b> FWAs include more local, individual and ad-hoc arrangements, such as temporarily working from home, or working non standard (that is. not 9-5pm) hours.<sup>5</sup></p>
	<p><b>Individual</b> flexibility, which focuses on the ability of the individual to negotiate a satisfactory work-life balance, and is most commonly achieved through the formal and informal FWAs described above.<sup>6</sup></p>
	<p><b>Organisational</b> flexibility is the ability of an organisation to choose or direct resources towards particular business outcomes. It is, in a sense, the ability of an organisation to adapt to its environmental influences and constraints.<sup>7</sup></p>
	<p><b>Numerical</b> flexibility is where an organisation's primary tool to meet fluctuations in product/service demand is the ability to adjust the size of its workforce.<sup>8</sup></p>
	<p><b>Functional</b> flexibility is the linear alternative to numerical flexibility, and is the dual- or multi-skilling of workers to enable the (current) workforce to adjust to current business needs.<sup>9</sup></p>
Motivations for implementing FWAs	<p>Flexible workplace practices have emerged in response to the emphasis placed on the '<b>work-life balance</b>' of individuals and the need for organisations to adapt in response to internal and external pressures, particularly in relation to labour supply.<sup>10</sup></p>
	<p>The development of many workplace flexibility initiatives are underpinned by the goal of enhanced <b>organisational effectiveness</b>.<sup>11</sup></p>
	<p>In tightening civilian labour market conditions, there has been a measurable increase in employment via 'non-traditional' work categories, such as casual, fixed-term employees, self-employed contractors, and labour-hire employees, driven by both '<b>supply-side</b>' (employee perspective) and '<b>demand-side</b>' (employer perspective) factors.<sup>12</sup></p>
	<p>Access for civilian employees to more individualised types of FWA is now mandated in <b>legislation</b>.<sup>13</sup></p>
	<p>Beyond the formal requirements, employers who offer their employees flexibility and <b>choice</b> in employment provide assurance that the employer is <b>supportive</b> and that the needs of individuals can be met when circumstances dictate.<sup>14</sup></p>
	<p>The increased levels of assumed <b>accountability</b> the individual has over their work as a result of access to FWAs is an important factor in both <b>engagement</b> and effort and can result in <b>productivity</b> gains for the organisation.<sup>15</sup></p>
Dependencies for access to FWAs	<p>Access to FWAs is, however, dependent on the employee's ability to request such arrangements and this in turn is related to the real or perceived level of <b>support</b> an individual receives from their supervisor.<sup>16</sup></p>

These elements of flexibility are not 'stand-alone' but interact with each element intersecting with and influencing the whole. Environmental considerations (structure, culture, macro, micro, internal, external, short, long-term) add further complexities to the interactions but are necessary to explore and understand the way that flexible work operates within a contemporary employment environment.



Regardless of definition, access to a variety of flexible work options is considered a normal part of most contemporary organisational environments and a way for employers to ensure competitiveness (see Table 1 for examples and associated literature). However, recent Australian research sheds light on some of the issues regarding requesting FWAs in organisations across the nation and emphasises that flexibility is not always a positive.<sup>17</sup>

Understanding the threshold for flexible work within an organisational unit and the impact on an individual, regardless of whether the request for a FWA is granted or not, should be a continued focus in further examination of flexible work practices.

## **Flexible work in the ADF**

ADF workplace flexibility practices for individuals have received increased profile over the last two years, due in part to specific critique contained within the Broderick Review.<sup>18</sup> This review identified flexibility as one area where there are significant cultural and structural challenges for the ADF in supporting other than full-time, on-base work and service options.

Significantly reworked in May 2012 as a response to the Broderick Review, the flexible work instruction Defence Instruction (General) 49-4 has now been incorporated into the *Military Personnel Policy Manual*, which sets up the structural frame for understanding and implementing workplace flexibility broadly within Defence.<sup>19</sup>

The success of FWA policy, both as a retention tool for the ADF and a work-life balance mechanism for its members, is challenged by the financial and personal costs, logistical difficulties and attitudinal barriers resulting from the way FWAs have been implemented within Defence. These challenges can be seen clearly in the application of part-time leave without pay, which has a very low take-up rate.<sup>20</sup> A second major organisational proxy for flexible service in the ADF has been the use of Reserves, who provide a workforce component that enables 'numerical flexibility'.<sup>21</sup>

Despite Defence White Papers and commentary on the role of Reserves and Defence force structure pointing towards even greater integration between permanent and reserve workforce components, cultural tensions around the value of full-time service remain apparent in the ADF.<sup>22</sup> For example, there are acknowledged tensions around perceptions of Reservists, with permanent members questioning the motivation, levels of commitment, and military skills proficiency of Reservists.<sup>23</sup> Such tensions have potential consequences in regards to team and organisational cohesion, impacting the attainment of organisational goals which, for individuals, may ultimately lead to disengagement from the organisation.

## **Study overview**

The Workforce and Work Design Analysis research project, which received approval from the Australian Defence Human Research Ethics Committee, examined complexities around Service practice (where, what and when) and work design (structure, content and work flow). Information was gathered from interviews with senior leadership and commanding officers, member interviews and a diary study, with the results then contextualised in a broad review of the literature and Defence knowledge.

The diary study formed the largest component of the project and provided a snapshot of the day-to-day Service experience.<sup>24</sup> Navy, Army and Air Force members were asked to complete a diary over five consecutive days to capture information on:

- Their overall experience of service in the ADF;
- The current state of flexibility within the ADF; and
- The productivity and well-being of ADF members.

Diaries were provided to targeted research sites: operational and operational-support units, training establishments and Navy, Army and Air Force Headquarters. The data collection period for each site was two weeks, during August and September 2013, and members could choose any five consecutive days to complete their diary within that period, with 733 completed diaries returned.

The findings presented in this article are drawn from two key areas of the diary study.<sup>25</sup> Firstly, an assessment of members' perceptions and understandings of flexibility, derived from free-text responses to the questions of what members think FWAs include and what they think 'working flexibly' means. Secondly, information on members' consideration of decision-making processes and access to FWAs, derived from a series of multiple choice questions on six specific individual workplace flexibility options (working remotely, taking a few hours off for personal reasons, compressed work week, altered start/finish times, job sharing, and part-time leave without pay).

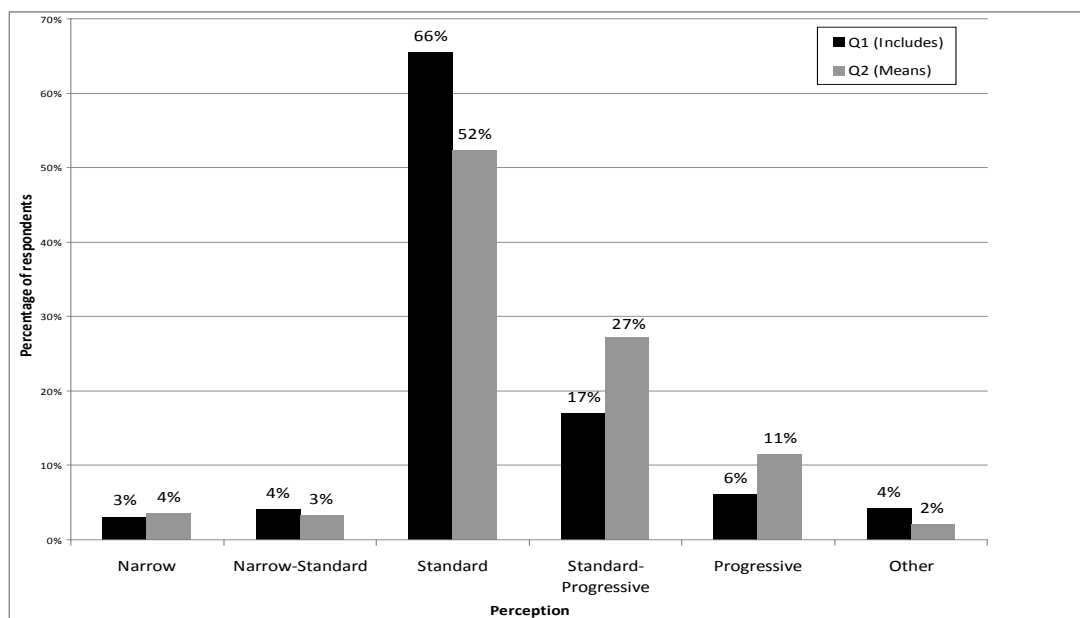
Qualitative data was analysed using a grounded theory technique, with themes emerging from the data rather than being imposed. Descriptive frequencies were calculated to show the general trends observed in the data. Quantitative data, based on a series of specific FWA questions, was analysed descriptively and data weighted for representativeness. The variables of *Service*, *gender*, *site type* and *rank* are the key demographics by which the responses have been considered.

## Findings

### *Attitudes towards flexibility*

Analysis of the free-text responses found that Navy, Army and Air Force members have a multi-dimensional understanding about what 'flexibility' is and what it means. Flexibility practices, levels of formality, reasons for access, dependencies and underpinning concepts all combine to provide a general understanding of Service member perceptions around flexibility.

The large proportion of members whose responses were classified as 'standard' or 'more progressive' demonstrates that member understandings of flexibility are heavily, although not exclusively, shaped by discourse apparent in current ADF flexibility policy and support materials (such as the *Military Personnel Policy Manual*).



**Figure 1: Perception of flexibility**  
(comparison between what it is and what it means)

- **'Narrow'** perceptions are very limited or proscriptive in relation to FWAs
- **'Standard'** perceptions align with current ADF discourse around FWAs (for example, they are consistent with the *Military Personnel Policy Manual*).
- **'Progressive'** perceptions capture concepts, attitudes and practices that are currently outside of the *Military Personnel Policy Manual* (circulating in wider Australian discourse).
- However, perceptions alignment is not necessarily equal to positivity towards FWAs in the ADF environment.

Acknowledging the variety of views regarding perceptions and attitudes towards flexibility can be beneficial to both individuals and the organisation, and help us understand and identify (and possibly minimise) the disconnects between FWA policy and practice.<sup>26</sup>

Overall, the results sit in contrast to the current discourse that suggests that, as a collective, Service members themselves require significant remediation to progress their thinking and support for a range of FWAs.<sup>27</sup> In addition, over 80 per cent of the sample population considered, and just over half accessed, at least one of the six flexible work options presented, which further supports the notion that FWAs are not inherently incompatible with Service life.

Yet while perceptions evident in responses to direct questions around FWAs seemed relatively benign or even somewhat positive, a very small minority of responses (7.0 per cent) expressed narrow, resistant attitudes towards flexibility in general and in their Services specifically. These views must be considered with respect to the wider context in which they operate, as the level/location of the persons holding these views may be more culturally powerful, visible or influential than members holding alternate (although numerically dominant) views (noting that the highest possible rank of survey respondents was Commanding Officer-level). Further, it may be that these respondents were the few who were able to explicitly (or confidently) articulate their implicitly-held views in regards to flexibility.

Taken as a whole, the results highlight an intersection of the worker and workplace; that is, development of Service members' perceptions of FWAs is most certainly influenced by the ADF workplace environment and experiences. The existence of more progressive views is also likely a result of external influences, such as personal experience, family, friends and media, acknowledging that the survey respondents (and ADF members more broadly) do not exist inside an ADF vacuum.<sup>28</sup>

The findings presented here have implications for the way the Services and the ADF talk about flexibility with members, and are particularly relevant if member attitudes towards and behaviours around flexibility are to be influenced.

### ***Member understandings of flexibility***

The most frequently identified workplace flexibility practices included flexible hours, flexible location, and work flow, and these were consistently present across the variables of Service, gender, site type and rank. The practices broadly align with the widespread conceptualisation of flexibility as the 'when, where and how' of the ways that work is conducted.<sup>29</sup> Importantly, these results further reinforce that member conceptualisation of what flexibility is and means may be shaped by those practices that are available and achievable within the current work environment.

In particular, constructs around 'when' in regards to FWAs emerged via focus on the flexibility practices around variability of work hours. The ADF is a work environment that is characterised by the duality of unrestricted service (no organisation-wide and clearly set 'minimum' hours per week) and the rigidity of base routines (lack of autonomy over work routine). The ability of members to exercise some control over these elements of one's work schedule may be a realistic and accessible expression of current possibilities around workplace flexibility within the Services.

In a civilian context, a focus on hours as a dependency for support for flexible working is not unexpected, as many workplaces are structured around a set number of full-time hours of attendance each week.<sup>30</sup> The results in this study may therefore appear anomalous, given that there are no formal, ADF-wide minimum hours promulgated: indeed, each Service and unit sets its own general hours (which can vary by type and intensity of work domain). Further, the requirement for members to provide unrestricted service may mean that any 'set' hours are subject to change in response to operational demands.

Two factors may explain the frequent identification by members of 'same hours' as a precondition to flexibility:

- An assumption that 'sameness' equates to fairness,<sup>31</sup> a somewhat rudimentary comparative framework, but one that is not unexpected in an environment characterised by uniformity;<sup>32</sup> and

- The presence of a continuing belief that hours equate to effort, which privileges presence over effectiveness when it comes to member productivity.<sup>33</sup>

These preconditions can be seen to support the widespread notion of what constitutes an ‘ideal’ worker—one that is seen to be available and puts the company first.<sup>34</sup> Such a construction has been found to be particularly prevalent in male-dominated environments (such as policing) but is also evident in the wider cultural articulation of the traditional male model of work, which is underpinned by the separation of work/home spheres and the gendered division of labour.<sup>35</sup>

However, the focus on hours sits in direct contrast to the belief—also evident in the results—that flexibility is acceptable as long as outcomes are achieved or that productivity is maintained. Such a dependency is more outcome-focused, and evidence of more contemporary thought around work and work management (which challenges the ‘ideal worker’ construction). A focus on outcomes allows workers to take greater responsibility for the way work is organised to achieve an outcome, rather than adhering strictly to a process-oriented approach. This results in increased organisational affinity and productivity of the worker.<sup>36</sup> Notwithstanding the fact that much military work is, by necessity, required to be process-driven, the response is indicative of ADF member capacity to think in different ways about work.

Leveraging identified dependencies, by reinforcing or myth-busting processes, may foster conditions under which workplace flexibility is more likely to be accepted. Whatever approach is taken, care must be exercised with regard to the (potential) impact on members holding contrasting views.

### ***Level of flexibility formality***

Although members’ overall perceptions of flexibility fit generally within current ADF policy framing, an important distinction is that members’ understanding of flexibility is not explicitly defined by formal, policy-driven practices.<sup>37</sup> Out of the 1123 combined responses to the questions on what flexibility is and means, the vast majority (84.6 per cent) did not refer to flexibility as being specifically formal or informal. The results indicate that formality (or lack thereof) does not seem to be a defining characteristic of ADF member understanding of what flexibility includes. This result is potentially significant given the effort/attention paid by both researchers and practitioners to maintaining the formal/informal flexibility distinction and the present emphasis on measuring (formal) FWAs within the ADF.

The rationale for formal FWAs is that FWA access (theoretically) becomes fairer for all workers: the decision-making criteria are transparent, there are avenues for appeal, and uptake/demand is more easily monitored.<sup>38</sup> In emphasising formality, the role that informal FWAs play in managing *ad hoc* work-life interface issues may (inadvertently) be downplayed, and consequentially reduce the ability of workers and managers to negotiate mutually-beneficial (temporary) work patterns.<sup>39</sup>

Further, informal FWAs may be more often used by those for whom, or in contexts that, accessing formal FWAs is associated with both social and career stigma.<sup>40</sup> Types of flexibility considered by the greatest proportion of members in this study were those that lend themselves to or are more easily actioned as informal arrangements; consideration of more formalised FWAs was much lower.

Specifically, the importance of informal FWA options emerged from the FWA activity level data where a large proportion of both consideration and action was in regards to the (predominately *ad hoc/informal*) FWA involving ‘a few hours off’. While the impact of the Service context shaping member consideration of what is possible must be kept in mind as an explanation for the results, it must be recognised that access to informal FWAs may also be a way of ameliorating potential negative career impacts which may result from formal FWA arrangements.

That the formal/informal distinction did not emerge when members were asked about flexibility in an open-ended way has two broad implications. Firstly, the default connotation of flexibility for members can be inferred as informal. High levels of awareness of and access to informal flexibility operating at the working level may mask the need for and expression of discourse around more formalised FWAs by members. This may be particularly true when these results are considered in tandem with flexible hours emerging as the dominant or default flexibility practice, and one which can be relatively easy to enact informally.

Secondly, there is some level of disjuncture between the language and/or framework used by members for understanding flexibility, and that used to understand and communicate about flexibility by the ADF. Such a disjuncture potentially compromises flexibility outcomes for both employees and employers and, therefore, has direct implications for those monitoring and managing flexibility access and uptake across the ADF.<sup>41</sup> These results are relevant for the ADF in relation to the way it communicates about flexibility to members, and may impact more broadly in regards to requirements to track/monitor and manage (formal) flexibility as required by the Broderick Review.

### ***Access to flexibility***

The results from the multiple-choice questions on specific FWA provide a snapshot of current FWA prevalence/achievement within the Services and show there is a strong relationship between taking action regarding flexibility and achievement of it. Overall, about two-thirds of members who considered at least one of the FWA options took some sort of action in regards to FWA follow-through. ‘Taking action’ at the individual level can be considered a prime enabler for FWA achievement.

**Table 2: Flexibility activity levels in the ADF by FWA<sup>42</sup>**

<b>Flexibility type</b>	<b>Considered</b>	<b>Took action</b>	<b>No action</b>	<b>Achieved FWA</b>	<b>FWA not Achieved</b>
A few hours off for personal reasons	70.6%	47.1%	23.4%	47.1%	0.0%
Remote work	33.0%	11.8%	21.1%	11.1%	0.8%
Altering start/finish times	31.5%	17.2%	14.3%	16.2%	1.0%
Compressed work week	11.5%	3.7%	7.8%	3.2%	0.4%
Part-time leave without pay	6.8%	1.8%	4.9%	1.7%	0.1%
Job-share arrangement	3.7%	1.6%	2.1%	1.5%	0.1%
<b>Overall (all types aggregate)</b>	<b>80.5%</b>	<b>55.0%</b>	<b>25.5%</b>	<b>53.8%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>
<b>Overall (excluding ‘a few hours off’)</b>	<b>55.7%</b>	<b>27.1%</b>	<b>28.6%</b>	<b>25.2%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>

It is clear that while an individual may consider accessing a FWA, results show they undertake a decision-making and risk-assessment process prior to taking any action. Service, gender, site type and rank were all shown to be factors that impact on rates of member action-taking. Overall, for the ADF, the potential ‘discontented non-requesters’ (those who thought about flexibility but took no action) appear to be slightly more Army, predominately male, working at operational site types and of lower rank.

These assessments point to a range of factors that intersect to create the ‘invisible’ and ‘cultural’ barriers to individuals taking action and, therefore, potentially accessing FWAs. The risk for any organisation in the existence of a discontented population segment is lost productivity (capability) via reduction in employer engagement/loyalty, and associated loss of productivity at both the day-to-day individual level and/or the replacement costs of lost personnel.<sup>43</sup>

However, factors influencing individual action-taking behaviour, including individual motivations (reasons) and imperative (necessity), must be considered alongside organisational constraints influencing their decision-making process. While encouraging members to ‘take action’ may result in increased FWA take-up, ‘taking action’ is also predicated on certain environmental conditions being met.

Member assessment of the likelihood of FWA approval, as well as consideration of the FWA impact on work team, were influential in the risk-assessment and decision-making processes involved in progressing desire to action. In particular, the perception that the FWA ‘won’t be approved’ was the most common reason for not progressing FWA consideration to action overall (38.6 per cent of reasons), and across Services, gender, site-type variables and members at the ‘other ranks’ level. These findings highlight the importance of the approval chain to accessing FWAs and that this importance extends not only to demonstrated supervisor attitudes and behaviours but also members’ perceptions of anticipated supervisor behaviour.

### ***Reasons for accessing flexibility***

Overall, the results show that reasons for accessing FWAs centred around life-management issues, such as managing the work/non-work interface rather than on work-related issues, such as increasing individual productivity. The more rigid nature of the day-to-day Service workplace environment is almost certainly an influential factor for the overwhelming focus on the life-management issues as a reason for access flexibility for ADF members.

Member motivations for considering flexibility were consistent with the broader Australian reasons for requesting FWAs—and reinforce for the Services the importance of family/childcare and its relationship to and as a driver for flexibility for ADF members. Indeed, reasons for considering flexibility across Service, gender, site type and rank were largely driven by the need to manage childcare arrangements.

The figures from the open-ended questions also reinforce these results, with attending to family needs, including attending to childcare requirements, dominating these responses as a key reason associated with flexible work (30.7 per cent of overall responses).

Emphasising ‘family’ as a reason for accessing FWAs, in both policy and practice, has the potential to marginalise FWAs as something only applicable or relevant for those attending to ‘family’ demands. This devalues consideration or requests for FWAs for members who need or prefer to work flexibly for non-family reasons.

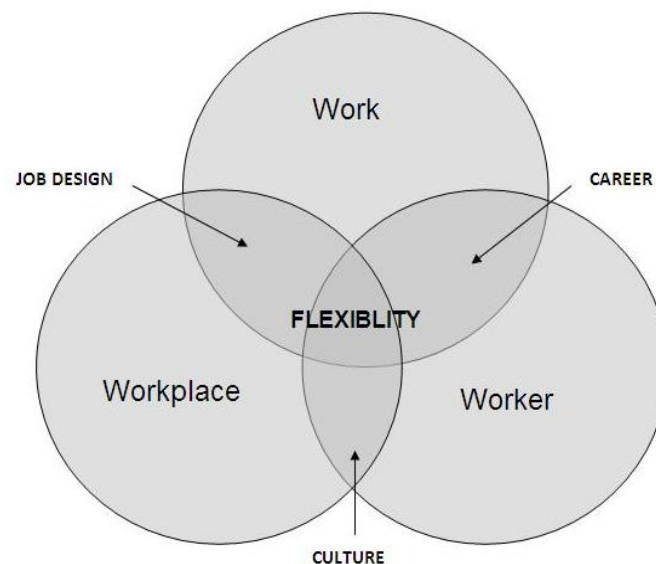
**Table 3: Reasons for considering FWA**

	<b>All FWA options</b>	<b>Excluding ‘a few hours off for personal reasons’</b>
<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Total survey population (result rank)</b>	<b>Total survey population (result rank)</b>
<b>Greater ability to work around child care arrangements</b>	21.0% (1)	23.4% (1)
<b>Health reasons</b>	9.5% (2)	5.8% (7)
<b>Making time for sports/hobbies</b>	9.1% (3)	9.1% (3)
<b>Making time to study</b>	6.4% (4)	6.5% (5)
<b>Opportunity for uninterrupted work</b>	5.5% (5)	9.9% (2)
<b>Just taking time out</b>	4.1% (6)	7.5% (4)
<b>Greater ability to work around care of someone other than children</b>	3.5% (7)	3.3% (8)
<b>Reducing travel time to/from work</b>	3.3% (8)	6.0% (6)
<b>Couldn’t find anyone to job share with</b>	0.3% (9)	0.6% (9)
<b>Other</b>	37.2%	28.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

It must also be acknowledged that while members recognised that workplace flexibility could assist them personally, it was not wholly perceived as a one-way deal. Many of the open-ended responses emphasised that FWAs are a balancing act between the needs of members and the needs of their Service. This recognition may constitute an ingress point to discussions or communications around workplace flexibility, and may even allay managerial and co-worker fears that FWAs are all about ‘take’ by the individuals concerned.

## Implications

The lenses of work, worker and workplace can be applied across the findings to flesh out the ways in which ‘flexibility’ articulates across the ADF. Each of these contexts draws attention to barriers and enablers to flexibility that might be leveraged to inform practice. Such analysis can help determine where and how flexibility, as currently observed in the ADF environment, is an anathema or panacea.



**Figure 2: Locating flexible work in context**

### ***Work***

The tension observed between an input-focus (hours) and an output-focus (productivity or capability) has implications for management of flexibility in the Service context, particularly in the space of work or job (re)design.

At the individual worker level, an emphasis on input (presence) reinforces the ADF ideal worker construct, which is closely related to the ability to always ‘render unrestricted service’. It also reinforces (and is reinforced by) organisational thinking and practices (such as resourcing conventions) that equate presence to assured capability delivery. Reconceptualising these linkages at both the individual and institutional levels is essential to enabling individual workers or managers to make adjustments to when, where and how an ADF member works using an output-focused model.

The level of formality, or complexity, of a particular FWA has an impact on a member’s consideration of what is possible in the FWA space. Across the board, members show high consideration of and access to ‘more likely’ FWA options. The informal FWA remains an important mechanism by which many (and particularly lower-ranked) ADF members manage their work-life interface (to achieve work-life balance).

Members may be taking their cues about what is possible from what is currently demonstrated within their immediate context. Members at site types and in positions (ranks) where alternate ways of working are more common or easily accessed (perhaps due to job design) show consideration of a greater variety

of FWA options and consider more complex options at greater frequency. As Service members do move around the organisation, we need to ensure that FWA ideas are (able to be) translated and applied in new contexts (innovation) and that the ability to work in more flexible ways is not constrained to particular organisational stovepipes.

That the formal/informal distinction does not emerge when ADF members are asked about flexibility in an open-ended way has a further two broad implications. Firstly, the default connotation of flexibility for members can be inferred as informal. High levels of awareness of informal flexibility operating at the working level may mask the need for and expression of discourse around more formalised FWAs by members. This may be particularly true when these results are considered in tandem with flexible hours emerging as the dominant or default flexibility practice, and one which can be relatively easy to enact informally. By preferring the more informal options, members may also be accessing flexibility in a way that allows them to manage the work-life interface so that potential long-term negative career impacts are minimised.

Secondly, there is some level of disjuncture between the language and/or framework used by members for understanding flexibility, and that used to understand and communicate about flexibility by the Services. Such a disjuncture potentially compromises beneficial flexibility outcomes for both employees and employers<sup>44</sup> and therefore has direct implications for those monitoring and managing flexibility access and uptake across the ADF.

In particular, these points need to be kept in mind when designing surveys aiming to capture data on 'formal' and 'informal' flexibility practices in the ADF.

### ***Worker***

The findings indicate that member conceptualisation of what flexibility is and means is shaped by those practices that are available and achievable within the current work environment. Member thoughts about and actions taken with respect to specific FWAs are also shaped by a range of factors (such as Service, gender, site type and rank). These factors intersect with the broader ADF and Australian contexts to create the present and particular FWA 'climate' in ADF. Identifiable within this climate are specific cultural and structural articulations that act as both barriers and enablers to ADF member consideration and, ultimately, achievement of FWAs.

Further, all the workplace flexibility practices identified in the free-text responses by members were constructed within the frame of the 'individual'. These frames of understanding have implications when communicating with the member about a broader range of workforce flexibilities that are more organisationally focused. If the default connotation when mentioning 'flexibility' is 'flexible hours', then reference to any type of 'flexibility' outside this frame needs to be carefully constructed and communicated.

Across the results is also a constant but subtle disconnect regarding what flexibility is compared to what it means, and this has implications for the ways that flexibility is experienced presently in the Services. Indeed, this conceptual gap is indicative of some level of lack of 'fit' between individual and social value and organisational policies/norms, and may be another piece of the puzzle explaining relatively poor uptake and facilitation of flexible work practices in the ADF to date. The gap however may also signify change potential or capacity within the organisation, as the more progressive flexibility meanings (or connotations) can be leveraged or inferred when asking members to progress their thinking and behaviour around flexibility tangibles.

### ***Workplace***

The results provide insight into the risk-assessment process undertaken by members as they progress thoughts about FWAs to action. Where member risk-assessment indicates low likelihood of action success or where success may bring adverse consequences, members are left in a situation where they are living/negotiating a work/life imbalance. This is cause for concern for both the individual and the Services, potentially affecting member engagement, satisfaction and productivity (as well as compromising a member's psychological contract in regards to the Services as caring and supportive employers).



For members who do progress their initial thoughts, there is a high likelihood of achievement of some form of FWA. This likelihood of success often hinges on perception of supervisor approval, and can be driven by a combination of local conventions/work practices, specific localised leadership fostering a supporting climate and/or implementation of Service/ADF directives.<sup>45</sup>

Thus, the supervisor/commanding officer influence extends beyond typically the role of application approver to have a much greater influence on member decisions around progression of thoughts about FWAs. Supervisors play a critical role in shaping the immediate and organisational climate to be supportive (or not) of ways of working that differ from those associated with the 'ideal worker'.

Cultural change takes place at the line manager or supervisor level, and the ability for such supervisors to exercise agency directives in managing their workforce is critical to the success of workplace transformation.<sup>46</sup> Enabling and supporting ADF supervisors to be able to fulfil this role (via specific management skills and adequate resources, as well as top cover) and rewarding those who do is critical to demonstrating organisational support for FWAs for workers who choose or need to work differently in both temporary and ongoing ways.

Further, gender remains a central cultural lens necessary to understand the take-up of flexibility options. The 'preference' demonstrated here by males for more informal options may not be such a 'free choice' but one that is shaped and constrained by the ADF circumstance; that is, an environment that values and rewards those members who are fully present and able to 'render unrestricted service'. Formal FWAs require men to challenge such constructions. 'Informal' options thus emerge as the middle ground, enabling the balancing of 'work' and 'life' spheres. Strong associations between family/childcaring (traditionally more 'feminine') reasons marginalise non-family reasons as legitimate reasons for requesting FWAs.

## Conclusion

This article provides an initial evidence base regarding ADF member understandings of 'flexibility' and their consideration and access to specific individual flexible work practices. In particular, attention is paid to some of the complexities and nuances of the Service context that impact on member decision-making around work and FWAs. Overall, the research highlights general differences and specificities, as well as those related to Service, gender, rank and work-site type, that need to be accounted for and should not be minimised in seeking a 'one-size' approach to understand and apply flexibility across the Services.

Given the insights generated by the data and analysis, is workplace flexibility an anathema or a panacea for the ADF? Members demonstrate knowledge of FWAs, albeit largely within the frame of reference provided by the organisation, and also consider and access both formal and informal FWA options. Such evidence shows that FWAs are clearly not an anathema: FWAs currently used in the ADF are enabling members to negotiate the work/life interface and especially to manage child/family-related pressures.

However, as observed in this study, workplace flexibility is not yet a panacea for the ADF. The use of informal FWAs is widespread, presenting challenges to strategic workforce sustainability and equity in FWA access. Member perceptions of the likelihood of FWA approval strongly influence their decision to pursue FWAs, drawing attention to the critical role supervisors play not only in regards to FWA approval but in climate-setting at the unit level. Further, the culture of the 'ideal worker', one who can render unrestricted and uninterrupted service, works against members considering and seeking FWAs.

Increasing members' options regarding FWAs has clear benefits for both the individual and the organisation, resulting primarily from greater loyalty and increased efforts associated with those employees who believe their workplace accommodates their needs and provides them with control over their work.<sup>47</sup> However, such benefits cannot be fully realised in the current environment of the ADF.

A range of activities have commenced within recent years to improve this situation, including Project SUAKIN, a workforce reform program whose objective is to design and implement a new workforce model that will help contemporise service options in the ADF. This structural reform is complemented by ongoing efforts in the cultural reform space, vis-à-vis *Pathway to Change* and Service-specific cultural reform programs.<sup>48</sup> So while workplace flexibility may not be a panacea for the ADF at present, the

foundations are there for it to be further developed, championed and implemented as a tool to assist the ADF to successfully compete for human resources in the future.

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*Dr Samantha Cromptvoets is a Visiting Fellow in the Medical School at ANU and currently also a contractor to the Department of Defence. Her recent research has examined the impact of deployment on Australian female veterans from the Vietnam era onwards, and contemporary veterans including women and Reservists. She has been chief investigator on a number of studies into the organisational culture of the ADF, and is currently developing a culture evaluation framework for Army. Dr Cromptvoets regularly provides policy advice to Defence, the Department of Veterans Affairs and other government departments regarding issues of culture, gender, health and wellbeing.*

## DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this article are the authors', and do not necessarily reflect the views of Project SUAKIN, the Department of Defence or the Australian Government more broadly.

## NOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> This article is based on the Workforce and Work Design Analysis research project conducted by Project SUAKIN. Approval from each Service Chief and ethical approval from the Australian Defence Human Research Ethics Committee was obtained prior to the study's commencement.
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## Book reviews

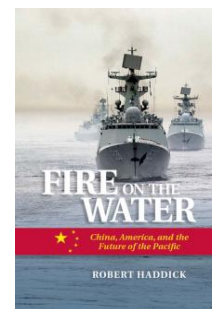
### ***Fire on the Water: China, America and the future of the Pacific***

Robert Haddick

Naval Institute Press: Annapolis, 2014, 288 pages

ISBN: 978-1-6125-1795-7

US\$37.95



#### **Reviewed by Commander Robert Woodham, RAN**

Depending on who you believe, the likelihood of open conflict between the US and China at some point in the future ranges from remote to inevitable. In contrast, there is no doubt about China's growing military might, and extrapolation just a few years into the future will see China present significant challenges to US power-projection capability in the Asian region. That is, of course, if the US does not do something first.

This compelling, in-depth and highly-readable analysis unpicks both the military and diplomatic facets of the challenge and offers strategies for the US in the years ahead. It also discusses the potential role of regional allies and partners—and how these might be managed by the US. The author does not see conflict as inevitable, instead offering strategies for influencing Chinese behaviour by imposing costs and providing rewards, acknowledging China's legitimate ambitions and concerns as it grows as a world power. It is a competitive approach but one specifically designed to avoid conflict. In this year of the ANZAC centenary, and the bicentenary of Waterloo, a strategy to avoid future conflict between powerful peer adversaries is particularly appealing.

A detailed review of recent Chinese military modernisation and likely future trends is presented, including anti-ship cruise missiles, advanced fighter and strike aircraft, such as the J-20, attack submarines, highly-capable surface-to-air missiles, and particularly the DF-21D anti-ship ballistic missile. By 2020, the author expects China to possess at least 80 DF-21Ds on mobile transporter-erector-launcher vehicles, which are obviously hard to target.

With a range of up to 1500 kilometres and minimal vulnerability to current missile defences, the DF-21D capability alone presents a substantial area-denial challenge to the US Navy. Of the US Navy's future carrier-borne aircraft, the F-35C Joint Strike Fighter has a combat radius of about 1,100 kilometres and can, therefore, only hold at risk targets in mainland China if the carriers come within DF-21D range; moreover, the proposed Unmanned Carrier-Launched Surveillance and Strike aircraft looks likely to be capable of being used only in lightly-defended airspace.

Adding to US difficulties, the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty of the late 1980s banned the US (and the then Soviet Union) from possessing land-based missiles with ranges between 500 and 5500 kilometres. Both countries have complied with this requirement since 1991. So the US is forced to look on while China constructs an ever-larger short- and medium-range missile arsenal, enhancing its land-based area-denial capability while the US is powerless to match it with an equivalent capability. Again, the prospect of the US helping to defend Taiwan with medium-range missile strikes from, say, Guam, is not necessarily a likely scenario. But mere possession of the capability complicates Chinese risk evaluations and behaviour.

It is well known that the much-publicised 'Asia pivot' policy is short on detail, though it at least acknowledges that the US is in the early stages of engagement in Asia. The US-China relationship is complicated on many levels, including deep economic interdependency. Similarly, the Air-Sea Battle concept purports to present a strategy to counter Chinese area-denial challenges in the Pacific theatre. However, as has been discussed in a recent book by the same publishers (*Anti-Access Warfare*, reviewed in Issue 193 of the *ADF Journal* in 2014), it does not wholly convince, at least in its present level of detail. This may be due, in part, to security considerations. In any event, we should hope that intelligent

procurement decisions in the coming years help to redress the balance of power. This book sketches out what a number of those procurement choices should be.

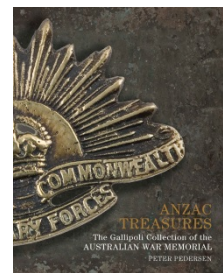
My only serious criticism is that this book has a rather dewy-eyed view of the beneficence of US influence in the Asian region, making frequent reference to the promotion by the US, since the end of the Second World War, of 'rules-based institutions, respect for rights and autonomy, and peaceful development'.

In reality, for much of the post-war period, the US has propped up a rogue's gallery of unpleasant dictators in the region (and further afield), requiring them only to be anti-communist in order to find favour, financial support and warm words from the US. The interests and ambitions of the US would be better served if these facts were honestly admitted and confronted. Otherwise, it is harder to argue that Chinese regional hegemony is not preferable to an American one.

This is a thought-provoking and highly-informative read which will be of great interest to the *ADF Journal's* readership.

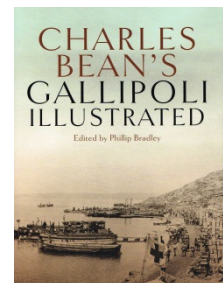
### ***Anzac Treasures: the Gallipoli collection of the Australian War Memorial***

Peter Pedersen  
Murdoch Books: Crows Nest, 2014  
ISBN: 978-1-7426-6723-2  
\$69.99, 432 pages



### ***Charles Bean's Gallipoli Illustrated***

Phillip Bradley (ed.)  
Allen & Unwin: Sydney, 2014  
ISBN: 978-1-7423-7123-8  
\$59.99, 198 pages



#### **Reviewed by Air Commodore Mark Lax, OAM, CSM (Retd)**

It is hardly surprising that with the centenary of the Anzac landings fast approaching, a whole swag of books would hit the market celebrating and retelling the story of the Gallipoli campaign. These two presage the rush and I am sure we can expect more as the official celebrations pan out.

The first book, *Anzac Treasures: the Gallipoli collection of the Australian War Memorial*, purports to tell the Anzac story as never before. In a sense it does but not as the reader might expect. This beautifully-produced and lavishly-illustrated book draws from the extensive collection of the Australian War Memorial, much of which is not on public display.

Dr Pedersen has followed the campaign chronologically but, rather than a war diary narrative as one might expect, he has chosen the photos, *objets d'art*, maps, personal diaries and militaria specifically to let the collection tell its own story. It is very effective and rather than go from start to finish, the reader can jump into this book, literally into any page, and be enthralled by its narrative which stands alone.

What makes the book so attractive are the spectacular photographs that accompany each story. The Memorial's collection spans the large objects, such as *Ascot's* landing boat, field guns and statues, including of Simpson and his donkey, down to the smallest, such as the Mauser bullet that killed Corporal Thomas Gooda of the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion. The book weighs 2.5 kilograms, testament to the good quality semi-gloss paper that has been used throughout. This one is certainly not for bedtime reading but rather should grace the coffee table.

Much of the Anzac Gallipoli campaign has become legend, thanks in no small part to Charles Bean's efforts in covering the soldiers' stories rather than the stuffy, official histories that praise the admirals and generals. However, much of that Anzac legend is presently being challenged as Australians consider the implications of the Great War now 100 years past and whether it really was a time of Australia's coming of age.

The second book, *Charles Bean's Gallipoli Illustrated*, is editor Phillip Bradley's commentary on and publication of extracts from the 21 diaries written by Bean while he was on the peninsula. It comes fully illustrated with hundreds of unpublished photos, most from private collections. Through Bean's words, you can come to understand how the Anzac legend began.

The reader can follow Bean's Gallipoli campaign as he wrote it—a very readable and human narrative that I believe no later writer could improve. Bean himself made changes after the war to correct facts and style, as all journalists are wont to do before publication. However, the story remains fresh and absorbing. As Bradley states:

[T]he diary extracts chosen ... tell us as much about Charles Bean's nature as they do about the nature of fighting at Gallipoli. His early writing imparts a sense of excitement and wonder that gradually fades over the course of the campaign.

The book follows previous attempts to capture the essence of Bean, such as Ross Coulthart's *Charles Bean: if people really knew*, which also tells the Bean story. But it is in Coulthart's words and covers the entire Great War period. For seeing the Gallipoli campaign as Bean saw it, *Charles Bean's Gallipoli Illustrated* certainly achieves the aim.

## ***The Centenary History of Australia and the Great War: Volume 1, Australia and the War in the Air***

Michael MolKentin  
Oxford University Press: South Melbourne, 2014, 284 pages  
ISBN: 978-0-1955-7679-5  
\$59.95



### **Reviewed by Kristen Alexander**

Dr Michael MolKentin believes good commemoration involves more than the emotion and sentiment currently rife in works purporting to honour the Great War. It needs to begin and end with sound history: rigorously researched and well-written history, which does not claim to be definitive because 'definitive' often leads to intellectual stagnation. Above all, history has to be honest, even if the truth revealed is unpalatable.

*Australia and the War in the Air*, the first volume of the *Centenary History of Australia and the Great War*, passes Dr MolKentin's tests. It is rigorously and broadly researched, drawing on private records as well as material from Australian, British, Canadian and German archives, including items not available over 90 years ago to the official historian, Frederick Cutlack. Pitched to a general, interested readership, this is exceptionally well written. It is tightly argued with no digression, and no padding or wasted words.

Much as it is tempting to say that this is the definitive work on Australia's aviation experiences in the Great War, it is not—and MolKentin makes no such claims. *Australia and the War in the Air* only touches on the technical aspects of machinery and hardware and, while the author draws on the Australian airmen's personal experiences to illustrate points, it is not about the men. Even so, MolKentin does not ignore their stories, finely blending them into the narrative. It is a technique he developed in *Fire in the Sky* (which is about the men) and again expertly deploys.



*Australia and the War in the Air* focuses on the strategic and operational aspects of air warfare, looking at the subjects from a number of different perspectives, such as policy, political organisation, leadership, training and logistics. Importantly, Molkentin 'positions the air war's modern Australian dimension in the imperial and operational contexts that define it'. This is perhaps where the truth is unpalatable.

It would be a natural tendency to think Australia played a key role in the Great War's aerial arena given an ongoing, falsely-premised belief in the distinctiveness and independence of Australian Flying Corps (AFC) operations. Our involvement, however, was only small. But it was valuable. Indeed, Molkentin acknowledges that 'although small in size, the breadth of Australian participation permits an evaluation of the role aviation played in the war; that is, the contribution it made to the empire's effort to engage and destroy the armies of Germany and her allies'. He then expertly analyses and well illustrates that contribution including, for instance, a case study of the AFC's 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Squadrons to highlight the significant part fighter aircraft played during the climactic battles of 1918.

Following a roughly chronological format, Molkentin covers the origins of Australian military aeronautics, including the foundation of military flying training at Point Cook; the evolution of Australian military aviation organisation and administration; recruitment and training of the AFC; and Western Front and desert operations. He stresses that Australian participation was not limited to the AFC and notes that many men joined the Royal Flying Corps, the Royal Naval Air Service and later the Royal Air Force, which was formed in 1918 after the amalgamation of the other two.

Molkentin concludes with a commentary on the legacy of Australia's wartime involvement, touching on the prevalence of Great War airmen in civil and military aviation in the interwar years, with a small cadre reaching the peak of their careers in the Second World War. Also of note is his careful discussion of air power which, as a concept, did not exist prior to the Great War, nor in the earliest stages of air warfare. Aeroplanes were there initially to supplement land forces. Accordingly, it is anachronistic to analyse the effectiveness or otherwise of air power in the war's early stages. Appropriately, however, Molkentin shows the reader the gestation and evolution of the principles of air power.

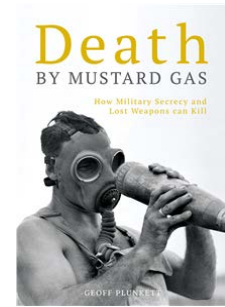
*Australia and the War in the Air* has good maps, as well as an abundance of decent-sized photographs illustrating the text which Molkentin sourced from private hands and public archives, including many previously-unpublished ones from the Museum of Australian Army Flying's collection. These photos are a credit to the museum and its volunteers who have done much diligent work to restore them. All in all, this is a quality production: case bound and stitched with appendices, index, endnotes and a bibliographic essay.

The latter is not usual but, as Series Editor Dr Jeffrey Grey explains, it was included to comment on the strengths, weaknesses and themes encompassed by the subject's secondary literature. In a sense, this was not necessary as Molkentin deftly reveals his opinion about some of his secondary sources (for instance, he refers to Trenchard's 'enamoured biographer' and A.J. Barker's 'classic' account). I must admit I prefer bibliographies, as I treat them as handy source summaries from which I can springboard to further research. However, I enjoyed Molkentin's discussion so won't bemoan the absence of a traditional bibliography. I will, however, quibble over the font size. I could not read this otherwise excellent book until I had upgraded my glasses prescription to one with maximum magnification.

In his preface, Dr Molkentin doffed his hat to the work of former RAAF Historian Dr Chris Clark, and hoped that *Australia and the War in the Air* would prove a fitting prequel to Dr Clark's *The Third Brother* (Allen & Unwin, 1991). It is more than a worthy prelude. This fine work is an important part of an historical and literary continuum of Australia's Great War air studies, starting with Cutlack's *The Australian Flying Corps in the Western and Eastern Theatres of War 1914-1918* (Angus and Robertson, 1923 and reprints) and including both *The Third Brother* and Molkentin's own *Fire in the Sky* (Allen & Unwin, 2010). Highly recommended.

## ***Death by Mustard Gas: how military secrecy and lost weapons can kill***

Geoff Plunkett  
Big Sky Publishing: Newport, 2014, 229 pages  
ISBN: 978-1-9221-3291-8  
\$34.99



### **Reviewed by Lex McAulay**

Of all the weapons of war, mustard gas must be one of the most horrific in its effects on the human body. When people are exposed to it, but its presence is denied because of secrecy, the results can be even more tragic. This happened in Australia in 1943 when waterside workers and RAAF trainees and ground staff were exposed to the gas over a period of time because of the handling procedures in place.

The captain of the ship in which a consignment of mustard gas and phosgene was delivered from the UK was an experienced seaman. However, he had no information on the exact nature of the cargo, other than that it was 'chemical explosive' and that a small team of RAF technicians would be aboard. Phosgene containers were loaded into No. 4 Hold and mustard gas into No. 1 Hold. Being a wartime voyage, other cargo included munitions and aircraft.

The trouble began at loading. No. 4 Hold was not suitable for the quantity of drums involved, and during the voyage one fractured, with much of its content leaking and soaking into the bituminous lining of the hold. As a safety measure, the hold containing the mustard gas drums had been double-sealed with tarpaulins before sailing, so nothing was known of the leak until these were removed.

The responsible Air Force officer in Australia was Wing Commander R. Le Fevre, RAF, a former lecturer in organic chemistry and, since 1940, an adviser on chemical armaments. He arrived in Australia after escaping the debacle in Malaya and was appointed chemical warfare adviser at RAAF Headquarters, Melbourne.

Some of the cargo was to be unloaded in Melbourne and the rest in Sydney. Problems began in Melbourne when the unloading crews became aware of the effects, although Le Fevre refused to admit the presence of chemical weapons. This continued in Sydney and, despite whole unloading gangs being seriously affected, Le Fevre blamed 'dust' from other cargo for the problems. Reasonably enough, the waterside workers refused to continue and RAAF trainees and ground staff were brought in, at first with no warning apart from the advice that gas masks were available but would not be needed.

As the men were not wearing protective dress and were working in hot conditions, the potential for the gas to have its designed effect was almost perfect. As it was most effective on the human body where sweat is generated, the armpits and groin area were attacked, as well as the eyes and mouth.

The tragic results continued, though at least the RAAF conducted an investigation, at which Le Fevre still refused to admit presence of the gas. There is evidence that despite the official posture, local people at several storage locations became aware of the presence of the gas as soon as it arrived. (This is similar to the official secrecy in World War 2 on the presence of Spitfires in Australia, and substitution of 'Capstan' as the term to be used; when the fighter was the most famous aircraft in the Allied world, no-one was deceived.)

Many of the men involved in unloading the gas drums from the ship, both civilian and RAAF, had health problems for the rest of their life. One waterside worker died, and there was a post-war death. A recluse in the Northern Territory found a small mustard gas bomb, opened it, and decided to put the contents on himself as a cure for arthritis and as a fly repellent, with lethal results.

Post-war, at court cases, Le Fevre did admit the cause of the damage to the waterside workers and RAAF men was mustard gas but claimed that he was bound by wartime secrecy. As this officer knew the capabilities of the gas, and that it was four times more powerful in warm climates than in cool, and that he

witnessed the distress inflicted on the unloading crews, his continued denials of its presence could be seen to be criminal. Given the nature of these weapons, there was a casual disregard for the destruction of stocks at the end of the war. As recently as 2009, containers of wartime origin were still being destroyed.

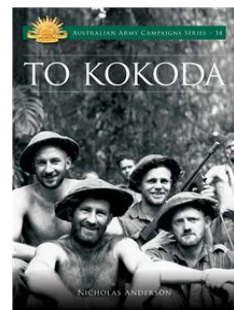
Readers might smile to read of wharf labourers described as 'workers doing their best to support the war effort', when other writings on the attitudes and work practices of those people during the war present a very different picture. But this incident did nothing to build trust in the authorities by the waterside unions.

While the book indicates the extensive research by the author, and there are photos of many of those mentioned in the text, with the proceedings and results of post-war court cases, and lists of men affected, there is one important group not mentioned or identified. The prime minister of the day is seemingly anonymous and no-one is identified who was involved in the political decision-making to request the chemical weapons, or the delivery and storage for them, nor anyone responsible for adequate post-war disposal. It was the Curtin Australian Labor Party government, of which the War Cabinet comprised Messrs F. Forde (Army), A.F. Drakeford (Air), N.J.O. Makin (Navy and Munitions), J.A. Beasley (Supply & Development), with Ben Chifley as Treasurer and Dr. H.V. Evatt as Attorney-General.

This book is obvious reading matter for those whose responsibilities include occupational health and safety, regardless of the field; a classic example of refusal to admit the obvious because of a regulation.

## ***To Kokoda***

Nicholas Anderson  
Big Sky Publishing: Newport NSW, 2014  
ISBN: 978-1-9221-3295-6  
\$19.95, 236 pages



### **Reviewed by John Donovan**

Australian military history has enjoyed something of a revival in recent years, and no doubt this will continue as the anniversaries associated with the centenary of the First World War occur. Within that revival, some battles receive only occasional attention, such as Fromelles (except around the time of the discovery of the Pheasant Wood burials), most battles on the Western Front, Greece, Crete and Syria, Alamein, the 1943-44 campaigns in New Guinea, and those in 1945 on Borneo and Bougainville. Some others, notably Gallipoli, Tobruk and Kokoda, are regularly the subjects of books.

Nicholas Anderson has produced an informative history of the campaign in New Guinea up until the recapture of Kokoda, with some useful summary judgments on its place in the history of the war against Japan. The style of recent books on Kokoda varies from popular 'yarns' to detailed academic studies. This book, like others in the Australian Army Campaign Series, is academically rigorous but written and published in a highly-readable style.

The descriptions of events during the Australian retreat and subsequent advance are well written, enabling the reader to understand events as they occurred. Anderson avoids the temptation to over-analyse events, which led one recent author (Peter Williams, *The Kokoda Campaign 1942, Myth and Reality*, 2012) to produce somewhat artificial estimates of the numbers engaged at specific times.

Anderson's account describes the logistic problems of operating along a tenuous foot track, with air-dropped supplies capable of providing only a limited supplement to the work of Papuan carriers. As an illustration of the difficulties of the Kokoda Trail, some wounded from the early part of the Australian advance back across the mountains could not be evacuated until weeks after the battle had moved on. These difficulties did not seem always to be understood by senior officers in Port Moresby, leading to friction between them and the commanders on the Trail.

Anderson's summary of the significance of the campaign is balanced. Kokoda did not save Australia from invasion, however, as Anderson notes, the information available at the time suggested that a 'battle for Australia' was underway. There might not have been an actual battle for Australia but it probably seemed at the time as if there was. That the Japanese had already decided against invasion was recorded in Japanese accounts that were not then available to Australia's intelligence authorities (but some recent historians seem to ignore this reality).

Pre-war strategy held that the Singapore strategy would ensure Australia's safety. In the event, however, Australia's security from invasion during the Second World War was ensured by the maritime power of the US Navy at the battles of the Coral Sea and Midway, not by the Royal Navy operating from the Singapore base. After those battles, Japan's ability to land troops at Port Moresby was minimal. This led to the Kokoda campaign, as the Japanese attempted an overland advance.

As Anderson points out, Guadalcanal was more important than Kokoda (or Milne Bay) because the Japanese made it so. Japanese power could not support both campaigns, particularly if they gave priority to holding Guadalcanal. They did this, easing the pressure on the Australian forces on the Kokoda Trail. Success at Kokoda, however, did keep space between Japanese forces and the Australian mainland. The campaign also provided the opportunity for the Australian Army to learn jungle-fighting skills, which were valuable well beyond the end of the Second World War.

Anderson deals fairly with the relief of senior officers during the campaign. Brigadier Potts lost his command in part because, under pressure, he was insufficiently informative in his reports. He might have been reinstated had Lieutenant General Rowell remained in command. But his successor, Lieutenant General Herring, would not accept Potts. The impact of his sacking on the 21<sup>st</sup> Brigade was exacerbated by poorly-worded (to put it tactfully) speeches by Herring and General Blamey to the brigade at Koitaki, implying that the troops had not fought bravely.

Rowell allowed his personal dislike of Blamey to overcome his discipline, and was sacked; even lieutenant generals cannot persistently be insubordinate! Major General Allen was replaced in large part because of his poor relationship with Blamey and Herring. His successor, Major General Vasey, arrived just as the Japanese withdrew from Eora Creek, leaving the way to Kokoda open. Vasey then gained the credit for Allen's work.

Anderson sees the experiences of the individual soldiers along the Kokoda Trail as the most significant legacy of the campaign. It is invidious to select any one soldier to exemplify those who fought on the Kokoda Trail but Sergeant Bede Tongs of the 3<sup>rd</sup> (Militia) Battalion stands out.

On 17 October 1942, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion was preparing to attack strong Japanese positions at Templeton's Crossing. Tongs identified a Japanese machine gun post as a potential obstacle to the attack. He crawled forward alone and threw a hand grenade into the post, destroying it. Tongs then ran 'like a Stawell Gift runner' back to his platoon, where the company commander ordered him to 'get that attack going Sergeant Tongs'. He then led his platoon forward in their successful attack. Thousands of such young Australians combined to win the campaign.

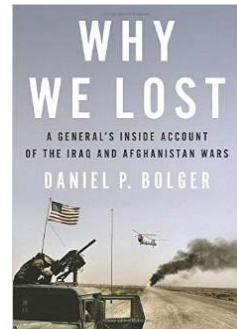
## ***Why We Lost: a General's inside account of the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars***

Daniel Bolger

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt: Boston, 2014, 436 pages

ISBN: 978-0-5444-3834-7

\$30.00



**Reviewed by Brigadier Chris Field, CSC, Australian Army**

In the last 50 years, four books constructively reflect on the US military's performance at war. In 1963, Korean War historian T.R. Fehrenbach published *This Kind of War: a study in unpreparedness*. In 1988, Neil Sheehan wrote *A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam*. In 1998, the now Lieutenant General H.R. McMaster published *Dereliction of Duty: Lyndon Johnson, Robert McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the lies that led to Vietnam*. In 2014, Lieutenant General (Retd) Daniel P. Bolger released *Why We Lost: a General's inside account of the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars*. All four books offer ADF readers honest reflections and insights into America at war.

General Bolger writes with rare authority. As a US Army senior leader he commanded NATO Training Mission and Combined Security Transition Command–Afghanistan from November 2011 to April 2013; the 1st Cavalry Division in Iraq from February 2009 to February 2010, and Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq from June 2005 to June 2006.

The first sentence of *Why We Lost*—‘I am a United States Army general, and I lost the Global War on Terrorism’—opens General Bolger's brutal analysis of war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Each of the book's 18 chapters commences with vignettes spanning modern and ancient conflicts across the globe. They examine and recognise the actions of colonels, majors, captains, sergeants, specialists and their joint equivalents, as well as civilians, fighting intractable enemies. General Bolger greatly admires these people.

His thesis is that the war in Iraq and Afghanistan required America's generals to ‘use a tactically superb force to contain and attrit terrorist adversaries ... [but that] in this task, America's generals failed’. He contends that the reasons for this failure include:

- An inability to identify or understand the enemy;
- Recommending to successive US governments that the military fight ‘two unlimited irregular conflicts with limited forces’;
- Campaign hubris, believing that ‘demonstrated US military capabilities and ... superb volunteers’ could ‘rebuild two shattered Muslim countries, and do so under fire from enraged locals’; and
- Persisting in failed courses of action, in Iraq and Afghanistan, for too long.

However, General Bolger is also positive about US campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. In particular, he praises US senior leadership for adapting quickly as the war evolved to organise, train and equip deployed forces, ‘especially the hard-pressed US ground services’; the early mobilisation of the US Army National Guard and Reserve which ‘guaranteed support for the troops in every county in America’; and US weaponry, equipment, training and small unit leadership that ‘far outstripped anything arrayed against them’. These advantages included the joint aspects of intelligence, logistics and air power.

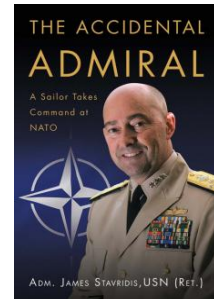
Finally, of interest to readers is General Bolger's observation that ‘the American character has not changed all that much in two centuries and a few decades, and so we see more than a few echoes of [US] military heritage’. Stressing this point, General Bolger compares General David Petraeus to the innovative yet overly-ambitious Douglas MacArthur, and tough Marine General James Mattis to George Patton or Marine General Lewis B. ‘Chesty’ Puller.

Continuing the comparisons, he contends that General Stanley McChrystal ‘evokes hard-bitten Matthew Ridgway, come to energise a floundering war effort’; General George Casey ‘conjures up thoughts of the stolid Ulysses S. Grant’; collegial General John Allen mirrors Dwight Eisenhower’s ‘overriding regard for the alliance’; and General Raymond Odierno, ‘schooled in this hard war he rose to run’, compares to Omar Bradley.

For himself, General Bolger identifies with ‘Vinegar Joe’ Stilwell of the China-Burma-India theatre in World War 2 who, according to Bolger, ‘told it like it was, eventually got sent home for it, and deserved a better war’.

## ***The Accidental Admiral: a sailor takes command at NATO***

James Stavridis  
Naval Institute Press: Annapolis, 2014, 288 pages  
ISBN: 978-1-6125-1704-9  
US\$32.95



### **Reviewed by Craig Beutel, Department of Defence**

As James Stavridis never expected to advance past lieutenant, in his newest book the former Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) claims status as an ‘Accidental Admiral’. Seeing only a future for himself in a law school, he was convinced to continue in the US Navy by the future Admiral Mike Mullen, with an offer to study at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, which specialises in international affairs.

Stavridis, now Dean of the School, writes his part-biography, part-manifesto reflecting on a naval career unbehind to the expectation of higher rank. The first Admiral to be appointed SACEUR, the professed innovator is cut from similar cloth as other warrior scholars of his era, such as James Mattis, H.R. McMaster and Stanley McChrystal.

*The Accidental Admiral* is in part a chronicle of Stavridis’ time as SACEUR, with particular insight into the genesis of security challenges still relevant to the ADF. He showed early concern with the policy of NATO expansion into what the Kremlin considered ‘greater Russia’, as he predicted it would be a ‘hard sell’ to defend Georgia and Ukraine. Russia casts a long shadow in the former Soviet satellites he warns, and perpetual ‘old skeletons of history rattle in the wind’ all over Europe.

The Admiral constructively lobbied European partners to support General McChrystal’s troop surge and underwrote the International Security Assistance Force’s handover of security responsibility to the Afghans. Stavridis advocated a Libya-style approach to Syria, questioning whether the current operations in Iraq against ISIL would have been better focused against the Assad regime. He foresaw an outcome in which either Assad survived and retaliated further against his own people, emboldening Iran, or partially prophetically, radical elements in the opposition would ultimately overthrow Assad and establish an al Qaeda mini-state. However, he does see benefit in an Iran focused on a fractious Iraq, instead of fixing on the destruction of Israel, of which he is very fond.

Building on lectures he delivered in the TED Conference forum (run by a non-profit organisation, under the slogan ‘ideas worth spreading’), Stavridis advocates a form of ‘smart power’ for the 21<sup>st</sup> century based on ‘international, interagency, and public-private connections in creating security’, asserting that:

No one of us is as smart as all of us thinking together—no one person, no one nation, no one alliance, no one organisation. Our combined knowledge is vastly greater than our individual inputs. So ideas must be shared, and strategic communication—our self-talk—matters deeply.

The former operational commander of the West's oldest security alliance advocates open strategic communication that transparently advocates its shared 'enlightenment values'. The convergence of security threats outside of their traditional stovepipes drives Stavridis' argument but he does little to address the disparity in public-private agendas or how the 'enlightenment' ideas of democracy, liberty, freedom of speech, and religion are applicable in a 21<sup>st</sup> century world.

Nevertheless, this is an important conversation for Australians to lend an ear to, not least as the US Government considers the affordability of its traditional 'hard power' predisposition across the world and seeks alternative policies. Stavridis' 'smart power' concept, which has lineage through Hillary Clinton and Joseph Nye, would continue to be a part of US foreign policy should a Democrat succeed President Obama. Concurrently, Australia also has strategic interests that we alone cannot secure, suggesting that Stavridis' charter is also worth contemplation closer to home.

A key method of his approach, Stavridis defines strategic communication as providing audiences with truthful and timely information that will influence in a precise way. However, he struggles to employ an application framework to the concept. After discussing 14 somewhat contradictory 'golden rules' and four recommendations, he admits that strategic communications are fraught with false starts and mistakes. However, he does point to the Arab Spring as a reason why mastery of strategic communication is an important endeavour to pursue.

Perhaps of most interest to the planner, Stavridis suggests that long-term strategic forecasting is erroneous in the modern world and that, far from the predictability of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, we are now 'entering a very tactical world'. Within his time as SACEUR, he points to an operational environment which was hard to assess due to rapid change. He offers justification through examples of the Arab Spring, the Global Financial Crisis, Iran nuclear issues, Snowden, global oil markets and the fact that Facebook and Twitter respectively now have the third and fifth largest populations on earth.

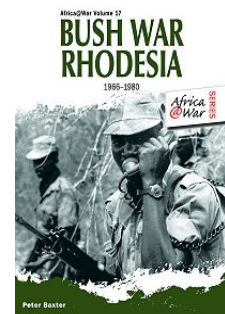
In his office, Stavridis aptly has a picture of the battleship USS *Maine*, whose sinking sparked the Spanish American war, to remind him that 'life has a way of sending us down hidden paths'. In attempting to face the challenges of this tactical, dynamic world, he warns that slow-burn issues of strategic importance get lost as the 'iron law of politics' is to manage crises as they emerge.

While one might consider Stavridis' ideas to be overly 'blue sky' and ungrounded in the 'tactical' world, readers should consider the book as broad strategic guidance and not a manual for success. *The Accidental Admiral* aims to dilute a lifetime's worth of observations into concepts that Stavridis believes are worthy of consideration by a new generation of leaders.

Stavridis writes with a career's worth of confidence in never being too concerned with rocking the boat. He continues to consider himself a 'disruptive innovator', based on a career advanced with 'house money' and never expecting advancement. In *The Accidental Admiral*, he appeals to modern militaries to consign their traditional introspective and repetitive practices and instead develop akin to the modern technological world, which embraces risk and innovates rapidly.

## ***Bush War Rhodesia 1966-1980***

Peter Baxter  
Helion & Company: Solihull UK, 2014, 130 pages  
ISBN: 978-1-9099-8237-6  
UK£16.95



### **Reviewed by Lex McAulay**

This is No. 17 in the series *Africa@War*, which presents accounts of wars on that continent since 1945. Other titles deal with the Mau Mau, Selous Scouts, Biafra, the South African Air Force's Border War, and 'Congo Unravelling'.

The text of *Bush War Rhodesia 1966-1980* presents a concise, balanced account of the political and military events of the warlike activities in Rhodesia's fight for independence. However, it also makes it plain that the whole effort after the 1965 Unilateral Declaration of Independence (by the government of Prime Minister Ian Smith, declaring independence from the UK) was doomed on a continent where colonial regimes were being replaced by black governments or dictators, and the very idea of white minority rule was anathema both locally and internationally.

Ian Smith's stubborn stand for rule by a minority white population is described as 'dogmatic' but other terms could be used instead. No other government recognised Smith's regime, and apart from support by neighbours trying to cope with guerrilla forces and international communist assistance to those elements, Rhodesia was forced to combat alone an expanding internal adversary that enjoyed international support and base areas provided by compliant adjoining governments.

At first, the Rhodesian forces easily dealt with the incompetent and amateurish attempts at incursion and armed action. But when the people who had been trained overseas returned and put into effective operation Mao Zedong's principles of guerrilla warfare, things changed for the worse and never improved. Once it was made brutally clear to black Rhodesians that government forces could not protect them all 24 hours a day 365 days a year—and that 'traitors' would be killed violently in front of their families and fellow villagers—government sources of information dried up overnight.

When ambushes, murders and robberies became widespread, despite government operations, whites began to emigrate and the basis for white support melted away. Despite this, the Rhodesian forces adapted, and planned and executed some very successful operations at home and into neighbouring nations. Rarely was a set-back experienced and the professional superiority of the Rhodesians, black and white, was demonstrated time and again.

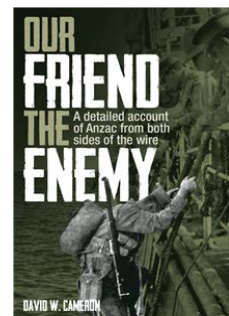
All the Rhodesian forces are described, as is their adaptation and evolution from the early 'easy' operations to the highly-skilled bush fighters of later times. Some of the cross-border forays were remarkably successful, and because of the nature of them, it does not seem that prisoners were taken, though documents were gathered when possible, as well as weapons and munitions. Nevertheless, just as the US forces in South Vietnam never lost a battle but lost the political struggle at home and internationally, so did the Rhodesian forces win battles but lost on every other front.

The book is very informative. However, because of its relatively small number of pages, it cannot give a lot of detail regarding some of the operations—and the author states that 'the last word is a long way from being written'. Otherwise, my main criticisms of the book would be its physical size, a sort of magazine-format page, which is inconvenient for normal bookshelf space, and lack of an index.

For those not deeply knowledgeable of the place and events, the constant usage of acronyms—UANC, ZANU, ZIPRA, ZAPRA, ZANLA and RAR, RLI, RhAF and others—can also be a little confusing. Presumably because of design factors, all the maps are gathered into a central batch, rather than placed at relevant places in the text. Readers also do not need little drawings of the various types of aircraft, in different sizes, on the maps themselves, which are otherwise good.

### ***Our Friend the Enemy: a detailed account of Anzac from both sides of the wire***

David Cameron  
Big Sky Publishing: Newport, 2014, 800 pages  
ISBN: 978-1-9221-3274-1  
\$39.99



#### **Reviewed by Jim Truscott**

Having read multiple books on Gallipoli and having recently walked the battle ground, I was eager to absorb this largish book to learn more of the Turkish perspective. I was not disappointed, as it is highly



readable and I enjoyed the many stories all over again. First timers will also benefit from the enemy's insights. Naturally, the friendly perspective has most detail but I did not sense any lack of balance.

It was good to have read the book after having been to Gallipoli, as each page was vivid to me. Some readers who have not sniffed the ground may find it complex to follow but only 12 months ago I scrambled up all of the gullies on the Australian side and I knew the terrain intimately. I have clawed my way up the steep and mongrel bush from the beach and I could relate to what must have happened on the first and subsequent days.

For a campaign that lasted 9 months, this is a racy book. It puts individual actions at the firing line into a company, battalion, brigade, division and corps context. The first 30 chapters are incredibly racy and full of carelessly-brave individual actions, platoon actions, company actions and fragmented actions. One always learns new perspectives and the early geopolitical quotation from Chris Roberts says it all as:

[T]he campaign had evolved through wishful and at times impulsive thinking in search of highly questionable outcomes, based upon a poor opinion of Ottoman capabilities and an attempt to salvage political reputations.

The author later says it in a slightly different way in that 'seldom have so many countries of the world, races and nations sent their representatives to so small a place with the praiseworthy intention of killing one another'.

There are some classic insights that I had not heard before. Previous studies had determined that the invasion was only achievable if mounted in secret but that this was not possible. Furthermore, a guide-ship anchored only 7.5 kilometres west of Gabe Tepe the night before, and the landing all depended on the steering of a midshipman who twice altered course without consulting anyone. Then there was the feeble leadership by Bridges, who failed to maintain the momentum to gain the third ridge. It is not surprising in retrospect that seven fragmented Australian battalions ended up facing one and a half battalions of Turks with a solid command structure.

The ferocity of the recapture of Leane's Trench, above the Valley of Despair, with some reinforcements who had never been in battle before is without parallel. But what made Gallipoli different to other theatres in World War 1 was that the Anzacs lived at Gallipoli with the dead alongside them. The Anzacs who craved water, and who were tortured by lice, faced three enemies consisting of the meat ration and the jam, with the Turks being third!

The accounts of the deception involved in the high-risk evacuation are detailed and almost too good to be true. I still cannot believe that the Turks simply let us go, as it was organised bedlam in the last week. The last 2000 men to leave were called the 'die-hards' and a Casualty Clearing Station was also to remain behind if necessary. This detailed account from both sides of the firing line is a long overdue part of Australia's military history.