
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Australia's Maritime Strategy

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

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Canberra



Chairman's Foreword

The rise of non-state actors, failing states, terrorism and the threat of weapons of mass destruction have caused nations to review their national security objectives and strategies. Australia is not alone in this challenge. At the same time, Australia must plan and prepare against conventional threats to its security. It is essential, therefore, that Australia's defence and national security strategies are modern and flexible enough to deal with all contingencies.

The inquiry into Australia's maritime strategy has provided an opportunity to examine the relevance and effectiveness of our defence objectives and strategies. Maritime strategies are significant in military planning because they provide the means to apply power flexibly over a range of contingencies and areas. Modern maritime strategy involves air, sea and land forces operating jointly to influence events in the littoral together with traditional blue water maritime concepts of sea denial and sea control. The role and influence of maritime strategies are therefore a significant feature of credible military strategies.

The inquiry found that there was the need for a comprehensive national security strategy (NSS) which would articulate all the elements that the Australian Government has at its disposal to address issues of national security. A national security strategy would address more than just issues of defence. It would address Australia's key interests such as economic, business, diplomatic, trade and environmental. The NSS should indicate where our military strategy fits within this 'grand strategy.'

Australia's interests are not just limited to our territory but stretch throughout the region and globally. Our defence objectives and strategy must, therefore, reflect the need to defend Australia and its direct approaches together with a greater focus on, and acquisition of, capabilities to operate in the region and globally in defence of our non-territorial interests.

The committee has recommended that the Government develop a new Defence White Paper for issue during 2005-06. The new White Paper should take into account the findings of the committee and, in particular, the need for flexible joint forces capable of littoral manoeuvre. In addition, a new Defence White Paper should be developed every four years through a rolling four year program. This will ensure that Australia's defence strategy will remain current and can meet developments in the global strategic environment.

The proposed new White Paper should ensure that the Australian Defence Force can implement the key features of a modern maritime strategy, including sea denial, sea control and power projection ashore for the purpose of peace keeping and regional assistance missions.

The committee, through this inquiry, is convinced that an effective maritime strategy will be the foundation of Australia's military strategy, and serve Australia well, into the 21st Century.

In conclusion, and on behalf of the committee, I would like to thank all those who have contributed to this inquiry.

Hon Bruce Scott, MP
Chairman
Defence Sub-Committee

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Lieutenant Colonel Roger Noble (until December 2002)

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Mrs Emma Martin



Terms of reference

The primary priority for the Australian Defence Force (ADF), identified in the White Paper *Defence 2000*, is 'to defend Australia from any credible attack, without relying on help from the combat forces of any other country'.

The key to defending Australia is 'to control the air and sea approaches to our continent, so as to deny them to hostile ships and aircraft, and provide maximum freedom of action for our forces'. For this purpose Australia relies on a 'fundamentally maritime strategy'. To successfully apply a maritime strategy the Australian Defence Organisation (ADO) will 'maintain and further develop an integrated and balanced joint force'.

This inquiry aims to develop a comprehensive understanding of Maritime Strategy and its place within Australia's broader military strategy and defence policy. It is **not limited** to an examination of Australia's naval or maritime forces nor is it focused only on the Defence of Australia.

The inquiry also seeks to understand the implications of a Maritime Strategy for the other tasks set out in the White Paper, namely: contributing to the security of our immediate neighbourhood; contributing effectively to international coalitions beyond our immediate neighbourhood; and support of peacetime national tasks.

Terms of Reference

The Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade shall inquire into and report on the ADO ability to deliver the necessary capabilities to meet Australia's strategic interests and objectives as defined in Defence 2000, with specific reference to the:

- ADO capability to apply the maritime strategy outlined in Defence 2000 in the current strategic environment;
- primary roles in Australia's maritime strategy of the key components of the ADO, including the three services, Defence Intelligence Organisation and ADF Command and Control structure;
- impact of Australia's maritime strategy on ADF capacity to participate in combined, multi-national regional and global coalition military operations;
- integration of maritime strategy with the other elements of Australian national power to achieve specified national strategic interests and objectives;
- impact of the evolving strategic environment on Australia's maritime strategy; and
- integration of Australian Defence Industry into capability development to support a maritime strategy.



List of abbreviations

AAR	Air-to-Air Refuelling Aircraft
ADA	Australian Defence Association
ADF	Australian Defence Force
AEW&C	Airborne Early Warning and Control Aircraft
AIGDC	Australian Industry Group Defence Council
AMDC	Australian Maritime Defence Council
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
ASA	Australian Shipowners Association
ASPI	Australian Strategic Policy Institute
ASR	Annual Strategic Review
BVR	Beyond Visual Range
CDF	Chief of Defence Force
CISA	Centre for International Strategic Analysis
CMP	Centre for Maritime Policy, University of Wollongong
CUC	Capital Use Charge
CVPs	Continuous Voyage Permits
DCP	Defence Capability Plan
DCR	Defence Capability Review
DOA	Defence of Australia
EEZ	Economic Exclusion Zone
IRAS	Independent Review of Australian Shipping

IRR	Incident Response Regiment
IRS	Parliamentary Library Information Research Service
ISPS	International Ship and Port Facility Code
JCPAA	Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit
JORN	Jindalee Operational Radar Network
JSF	Joint Strike Fighter
MOLE	Manoeuvre Operations in the Littoral Environment
MUA	Maritime Union of Australia
NSCC	National Security Committee of Cabinet
NSR	Australian Naval Shipbuilding and Repair Sector Strategic Plan
NSS	National Security Strategy
PAES	Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements
PBS	Portfolio Budget Statements
RSL	Returned and Services League
RUSI	Royal United Services Institute of Australia
SCNS	Secretaries Committee on National Security
SDD	System Design and Development
SLOCs	Sea Lines of Communication
STOVL	Short take-off and vertical landing
SVPs	Short Voyage Permits
TAG	Tactical Assault Group
UAV	Uninhabited Air Vehicles
UCAV	Uninhabited Combat Air Vehicles
<i>2000 White Paper</i>	<i>Defence 2000: Our Future Defence Force</i>
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction



List of recommendations

Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that the Government develop a national security strategy (NSS) which addresses Australia's key interests such as, but not limited to:

- economic;
- business;
- leisure / tourism;
- diplomatic and trade;
- social and cultural;
- transnational crime;
- illegal migration;
- population policy;
- the protection of critical infrastructure such as water, power, transport and information communications;
- environmental; and
- defence and security.

The NSS should clearly articulate and demonstrate that there is a coherent and coordinated approach by Government to securing our national interests. (paragraph 3.28)

Recommendation 2

The committee recommends that the Defence Minister develop a new Defence *White Paper* for issue during 2005-06. From the introduction of this *White Paper*, a new Defence White Paper should be developed every four years through a rolling four year program.

The proposed new *White Paper* should re-emphasise the point that Australia's defence policy is ultimately defensive. The committee would envisage that 'power projection ashore' would relate to instances where Australian forces, as part of coalitions, have been requested to assist with the affairs in other nations.

The Government, in developing the new *White Paper*, should take into account the conclusions made by the committee including:

- Australia's strategic objectives be the defence of Australia and its direct approaches together with greater focus on, and acquisition of, capabilities to operate in the region and globally in defence of our non-territorial interests;
- clear articulation of why Australia's security is interrelated with regional and global security;
- the continuation of the commitment to 'self-reliance' in those situations where Australia has least discretion to act;
- focusing on measures that will enhance interoperability with Australia's allies such as the US; and
- developing and implementing a maritime strategy which includes the elements of sea denial, sea control and power projection ashore. (paragraph 4.124)

Recommendation 3

The Department of Defence should make a statement, subject to security requirements, outlining the Army sustainment model and providing the Parliament with reassurances that the model will be effective and will meet contingencies consistent with guidance provided in the 2000 Defence White Paper. (paragraph 5.46)

Recommendation 4

The Minister for Defence should make a statement outlining Army Reserves policy focusing on Reserve:

- training;
- effectiveness;
- equipment and capabilities;
- readiness;
- transition to new functions;
- blending with regular units; and
- detailed cost data. (paragraph 5.47)

Recommendation 5

The committee recommends that the Department of Defence review the number of air-to-air refuelling (AAR) aircraft that it will need to mount effective operations. The committee is of the view that Defence may require more AARs than has currently been planned. (paragraph 5.72)

Recommendation 6

The committee recommends that the Department of Defence continues to examine air combat capabilities in the region and the cost of ongoing upgrades to the F/A-18A versus its fatigue and ageing. If the F-35 will not be available by 2012 then the Government should give cost details of prolonging the lifespan of the F/A-18A, and provide details on the range of options to maintain air superiority in the region. (paragraph 5.73)

Recommendation 7

The committee recommends that the Minister for Defence by 2006 make a statement clarifying Australia's strike capability in the light of its decision to retire early the F-111. (paragraph 5.74)

Recommendation 8

The Government's decision to purchase three air warfare destroyers for delivery by about 2013 is supported.

The Department of Defence, however, should explain how adequate air protection will be provided to land and naval forces before the air warfare destroyers are delivered in 2013. (paragraph 5.90)

Recommendation 9

If in 2006 the Government confirms that it will purchase the Joint Strike Fighter (F-35) then it should consider purchasing some short take-off and vertical landing (STOVL) F-35 variants for the provision of organic air cover as part of regional operations. (paragraph 5.91)

Recommendation 10

The committee recommends that the Government outline its progress with joint operations and regional cooperation initiatives which seek to enhance the security and protection of vessels using sea lines of communication (SLOCs). (paragraph 6.37)

Recommendation 11

The committee recommends that when the Department of Defence develops a new Defence *White Paper*, it should ensure that the maritime strategy includes clear and explicit reference to Australia's *Oceans Policy* and explains its interrelationship with Defence policy. (paragraph 6.38)

Recommendation 12

The committee recommends that the Government provide a report to Parliament outlining its progress with helping to develop a regional *Oceans Policy*. (paragraph 6.39)

Recommendation 13

The committee recommends that the Government, as a matter of urgency, respond to the measures proposed by the Independent Review of Australian Shipping, and state whether or not it intends to introduce an Australian Shipping policy. (paragraph 6.75)

Recommendation 14

The committee recommends that, as part of the next Defence *White Paper*, the Department of Defence outline the role of merchant shipping and its support for defence objectives. (paragraph 6.76)

