

## Maritime strategy

### Introduction

- 4.1 One of the key objectives of the inquiry is to examine and where possible identify measures that will enhance Australia's maritime strategy. Chapter two has provided essential background information outlining the key maritime strategy concepts.
- 4.2 This chapter examines the key debates arising in the evidence about the nature of Australia's maritime strategy and ways that it can be improved. A discussion of maritime strategy is not complete without first understanding the influence of the Defence Budget in the debate. The first part of this chapter examines the connection between budget and strategy.
- 4.3 A further influence in developing strategy is knowledge of threats and capabilities. Military strategy is not developed in a void and must be underlaid by a thorough analysis of capability which exists in Australia's region of interest, and in areas around the world in which Australian forces are involved in operations. The second part of this chapter examines these issues.
- 4.4 The major part of this chapter examines debates about Australia's maritime strategy in detail. The *2000 White Paper* states that 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'. The *2000 White Paper* concludes that this means 'we need a fundamentally maritime strategy.'
- 4.5 Many of the submissions to the inquiry argue that Australia does not have a true maritime strategy. They suggest that this has created a 'continentalist' approach to defence strategy. These views will be

examined in detail and the committee will discuss the implications and make conclusions about these debates.

## The Defence Budget

4.6 Defence funding in 2002-2003 was about \$14.5 billion and in 2003-2004 it is estimated to be about \$15.8 billion. A feature of the *2000 White Paper* was the acknowledgement that defence spending will need to grow by an average of about three percent per annum in real terms over the decade. Defence has been directed to plan within that commitment.<sup>1</sup> The *2000 White Paper* stated:

...the Government's defence funding projections will mean that in 2010 we will be spending about the same proportion of GDP on defence as we are today. That remains 1.9 per cent. We believe this level of funding is justified within our overall national priorities and will ensure that we can achieve the strategic objectives we have identified.<sup>2</sup>

4.7 Within this funding base the Defence Capability Plan (DCP) provides for a detailed costed capability plan for the Australian Defence Force (ADF) over the next 10 years. The DCP is subject to annual review 'to take account of changing strategic circumstances, new technologies and changed priorities.'<sup>3</sup>

4.8 The four key cost pressures identified in the *2000 White Paper* relate to personnel costs, operating costs, investment in new capability and increased readiness costs.<sup>4</sup> The need to invest in new capability relates to the ageing of key equipment and the need to replace old equipment with comparable capability. The ageing of a range of key capabilities is often referred to as 'block obsolescence.' For example, the need to eventually replace the F/A-18 combat aircraft and F-111 strike aircraft is expected to cost at least \$16 billion.

4.9 Total Defence funding, showing real and nominal growth rates, is shown in Table 4.1.

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1 Department of Defence, *Defence 2000, Our Future Defence Force*, 2000, p. xvii.

2 Department of Defence, *Defence 2000, Our Future Defence Force*, 2000, p. 118.

3 Department of Defence, *Defence 2000, Our Future Defence Force*, 2000, p. xiii.

4 Department of Defence, *Defence 2000, Our Future Defence Force*, 2000, pp. 119-120.

Table 4.1 Total Defence Funding – Real and nominal growth rates

	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
\$m real	12 445	12 648	14 501	14 609	15 806	15 942	16 174	17 139
\$m adjusted*	12 445	12 648	14 501	14 857	15 557	15 942	16 174	17 139
nominal growth		1.6%	14.7%	2.5%	4.7%	2.55	1.5%	6.0%
real growth		-2.7%	12.4	-0.6%	2.6%	0.5%	-0.5%	3.9%

Source Australian Strategic Policy Institute, *The Cost of Defence, ASPI Defence Budget Brief 2003-04*, May 2003, p. 15. \*Adjusted for the repayment of \$248.6 million in 2002-03 for costs incurred in 2002-03 for the Iraqi war.

## Budget and strategy?

4.10 One of the critical issues examined during the inquiry was the relationship between military strategy and the Defence budget. Australia's Defence strategy is articulated through the *2000 White Paper* and the annual Defence budget essentially provides the funding to allow for the realisation of capability ambitions outlined in the DCP. If strategy is significantly changed then this could have implications for capability which in turn will have budgetary implications.

4.11 The point was made during hearings that an examination of strategy could not be made in isolation and that budgetary issues must be taken into account. Professor Paul Dibb stated:

First, it is quite easy to indulgently wave one's arms around and talk about strategy. That is the easy part of the game. In my experience as deputy secretary, the difficult part is joining strategy with force structure priorities within a limited budget. Those who do not address those issues and who duck the issues of force structure priorities and money are intellectual lightweights. They need to be encouraged to decide, if they are in favour of increasing something, what are they in favour of cutting within a defined and constrained budget?<sup>5</sup>

4.12 The view that strategy can only be discussed against a detailed budget was not altogether embraced. Alternatively, strategy could be developed and then the available budget would as far as possible be made to fit the strategy. Dr Alan Dupont stated:

It has been suggested that, if any government wants to depart from the strategic planning assumptions of the last 20 years, it does so at its peril. It would cost enormous amounts of money,

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5 Professor Paul Dibb, *Transcript*, p. 44.

and the government does not have that—and no government would anyway—so how can we do it? I have a problem with that argument. It seems to me reasonable that the first thing you do is sort out your strategy before you start talking about detailed costings. How can you cost something if you do not know what it is?<sup>6</sup>

4.13 Dr Michael Evans made a similar point:

I heard this morning that you need strategy and money. I beg to differ on that point. If you take the interwar period, the Germans developed the blitzkrieg using committees. They did not have any money. The Americans developed carrier warfare and the concepts of carrier warfare at the Naval War College. They did not have any money. And the Russians developed the theory of deep operations and they did this in their war colleges. They did not have any money.<sup>7</sup>

4.14 The adequacy of the Defence budget and the problems of delivering capability were further matters that were examined. Professor Dibb suggested that the 'Defence Capability Plan is not deliverable at three per cent real growth.'<sup>8</sup> Professor Dibb warned that budgetary pressures are becoming more serious with growing reliance on ageing platforms such as the F-111, high operational tempo and simultaneous deployments. He concluded that there was 'a coming train smash in the defence budget.'<sup>9</sup>

4.15 In relation to the DCP, the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) had similar doubts about its achievability commenting that 'as it stands, the DCP is undeliverable, unaffordable, and uncertain.'<sup>10</sup> Defence discussed the complexities of managing its budget and achieving the required capability:

We are then trying to balance our current and our future force. It really is a balance. It is a trade-off. At the extreme end, you could argue that our capabilities are being driven by the budget; but that is probably the same in any area of government in that there is only a certain amount of funding available. What we have to ensure—and we are at the moment—is that we can make the right

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6 Dr Alan Dupont, *Transcript*, p. 136.

7 Dr Michael Evans, *Transcript*, p. 63.

8 Professor Paul Dibb, *Transcript*, p. 49.

9 Professor Paul Dibb, *Transcript*, p. 49.

10 Australian Strategic Policy Institute, Sinews of War, *The Defence Budget in 2003 and How We Got There*, An ASPI Policy Report, 2003, p. 4.

sorts of trade-offs and decisions within that budgetary envelope to acquire and to continue to have the capability that we need.<sup>11</sup>

- 4.16 In view of the concerns about the difficulty of meeting Defence capability needs it is not surprising that a range of evidence argued for an increase to the Defence budget. Professor Dibb indicated that Australia needs ‘to spend about another billion dollars a year; but that is in a budget, frankly that is in deep trouble.’<sup>12</sup> The Australian Centre for Maritime Studies commented that Defence has been ‘starved of funds...over the last 10 years.’<sup>13</sup> A similar view was made by Future Directions International which commented that ‘Defence has been underfunded for at least a decade’.<sup>14</sup> Future Directions International stated:

A large increase in defence expenditure is now required. However, given the lead times for the acquisition and introduction to service of defence systems and personnel the results of this will appear too late to be effective in the current crises. Australia's national security, and the ability to protect our national interests are in jeopardy.<sup>15</sup>

- 4.17 The Navy League of Australia also agreed that there was an inadequate Defence budget which was placing increased demands on the Defence Force since the *2000 White Paper* was formulated.<sup>16</sup> The Australian Defence Association was unequivocal in its advice that Australia cannot provide ‘an adequate defence capability or an adequate set of security options by spending just 1.8 per cent of GDP.’<sup>17</sup>

- 4.18 Dr Dupont was similarly concerned about the inadequacy of current Defence funding but acknowledged that competing government needs would always place a restraint on what could be provided to Defence. Dr Dupont stated:

I think that 1.9 per cent is a bit on the short side. In an ideal world, yes, I think that we should aim for the 2.1 per cent or 2.2 per cent that we have talked about and that has been highlighted in strategic documentation for 20 years but that we have seldom reached. That is a political problem for all governments. It is pretty hard to justify increases in defence spending unless you have a

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11 Mr Shane Carmody, Deputy Secretary, Department of Defence, *Transcript*, p. 311.

12 Professor Paul Dibb, *Transcript*, p. 49.

13 Mr Harold Adams, Australian Centre for Maritime Studies, *Transcript*, p. 112.

14 Mr Lee Cordner, Future Directions International, *Transcript*, p. 121.

15 Future Directions International (formerly Centre for International Strategic Analysis), *Submission 6*, p. 10

16 The Navy League of Australia, *Submission 11*, p. 3.

17 Mr Michael O'Connor, Australian Defence Association, *Transcript*, p. 248.

series of crises. Maybe now is about the only time you could justify that; otherwise it is very hard.<sup>18</sup>

## Conclusions

- 4.19 In discussing any matter relating to Defence it is essential to have an understanding of budgetary matters. The Defence budget is extremely tight and the Department of Defence has the challenging task of balancing and meeting priorities within that budget.
- 4.20 It was suggested in evidence that an examination of strategy would be undermined if the examination was not clearly linked to capability which was underpinned by a limited budget. This view is not disputed if it is applied to an existing strategy as set out in the *2000 White Paper*. Indeed, it should be expected that Defence planners will be working at delivering Australia's defence strategy with these imperatives in mind.
- 4.21 Accurate and comprehensive strategy analysis has to be undertaken as an essential prerequisite for effective defence planning. Defence planners should not be starting out first with a budget and trying to match a strategy to the available funds. The most important point to recognise in any examination of strategy is that a significant change to strategy can lead to significant downstream changes in capability.
- 4.22 A further part of the examination on the linkage between strategy and budget included debate about the adequacy of the total Defence budget. The majority of evidence suggested that Defence has been underfunded for at least the last ten years which has resulted in 'severe capability limitations.' While these observations are serious, the committee, as part of this inquiry, is not in a position to make determinations about what should be a valid level of Defence funding.
- 4.23 Defence spending in 2002-03 is about 1.9% of GDP which equates to about \$15.5 billion. It should be noted that the committee has previously argued that the use of percentage of GDP is not the most useful mechanism for quantifying funds.<sup>19</sup> The Committee stated in 1998 that:
- ...there existed no logic for the establishment of Defence funding as a defined proportion of GDP. However, calculation of GDP share may still provide a useful means of comparison of government spending priorities within a given year. It may also be used to indicate general trends in a given area of government spending over a prolonged period, although external factors and

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18 Dr Alan Dupont, *Transcript*, p. 136.

19 Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, *Funding Australia's Defence*, April 1998, pp. 16-17.

implementation of efficiency initiatives will reduce the precision of GDP share as an analysis tool.<sup>20</sup>

- 4.24 Any increase in the quantum of funds to Defence will have consequent flow on effects in the Federal Budget. Spending initiatives in other areas of government may need to be reduced or cancelled or alternatively taxation would need to be increased.
- 4.25 The current Defence *2000 White Paper* stated that the ‘Government estimates that defence spending will need to grow by an average of about three per cent per annum in real terms over the next decade.’<sup>21</sup> The Australian Strategic Policy Institute’s (ASPI) analysis of real growth in defence spending, as shown in Table 4.1, shows that Defence spending has not achieved the level of growth as stated in the *2000 White Paper*. The committee concludes that there must be a renewed commitment by Government to achieving real growth of at least 3 per cent in defence spending as set out in the current *Defence 2000 White Paper*.
- 4.26 Funding for Defence is at a critical stage. Block obsolescence, which is the ageing of key capital equipment such as F/A-18s, F-111s and warships, will have significant downstream costs when these key defence platforms need to be replaced. It is expected, for example, that approximately \$16 billion will be required to replace our current fighter and strike aircraft. The committee is particularly concerned about particular statements raised by defence analyst such as there ‘is a coming train smash in the Defence budget’ and ‘as it stands, the Defence Capability Plan is undeliverable, unaffordable and uncertain.’
- 4.27 The committee concludes, therefore, that the longer the Defence budget is not increased to accommodate the challenge of block obsolescence the more serious this matter will become. It is essential that Government and Opposition work together, in the national interest, to arrive at a solution for the long-term funding of Australia’s defence needs. It should be noted, however, that Australian Commonwealth Government outlays as a proportion of GDP are significantly lower than most other countries in the OECD. It is expected that this trend will continue and, therefore, it is unlikely that the Commonwealth Government will be able to increase the budget allocation to defence at any time, short of war.

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20 Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, *Funding Australia’s Defence*, April 1998, p. 17.

21 Department of Defence, *Defence 2000, Our Future Defence Force*, 2000, p. 117.

## Threats and capabilities

- 4.28 An examination of strategy raises the question about the extent to which possible external threats or the existence of external capabilities factor in to the assessment. In an operational context, Defence receives intelligence on a range of developments occurring in the region. These sources of information are mostly classified but information about capabilities is also available from the public domain.
- 4.29 During the inquiry, a range of matters about threats and capabilities were examined which are discussed in the following sections.

## Threats, capabilities, scenario planning and lead times

- 4.30 During the hearings the validity of using threat assessments versus assessing capability was debated. The general consensus was that it was unwise to develop strategy and capability around threats. In contrast it was considered more effective and sound to develop strategy around external current and future capabilities. Professor Dibb stated:

In case you think we are an orphan with regard to having discovered in the late seventies and through the eighties the idea of structuring a defence force without a threat but on capabilities, and having a margin of technological superiority over our region—which again successive governments have endorsed—let me draw your attention to the quadrennial defence review of the Pentagon in late 2001, which suddenly stated that the United States was no longer going to base its force structure on threats but on capabilities. We are in good order with the United States.<sup>22</sup>

- 4.31 The Australian Defence Association (ADA) warned that ‘a force should never be structured on the basis of a threat assessment because, firstly, by the time you get agreement on what the threat is, it is too late to develop the force; and, secondly, in our very fluid and somewhat convoluted strategic world these days, the purpose of your defence policy should be to give government as wide a range of military options as possible to use or not to use.’<sup>23</sup> Farrar provides further reasons why it is necessary to focus on capability and not threats:

Nations can never know the political intentions of foreign governments, and these can change very quickly. But all nations are constrained in their actual military capabilities to what they have in service, and what they are bringing into service. It takes

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22 Professor Paul Dibb, *Transcript*, p. 45.

23 Mr Michael O'Connor, Australian Defence Association, *Transcript*, p. 249.



years – sometimes decades – to expand capabilities. Therefore, all nations work threat levels based on real military capability, and not on current political intentions.<sup>24</sup>

- 4.32 Defence indicated that it conducts scenario planning against which it develops capabilities. Defence stated:

We think about a range of possible scenarios, from operations very close to Australia, where we have less flexibility, to operations far a field. We ask, ‘What are the balance of forces, what are the strengths and weaknesses and how do we develop our force structure?’ We do that constantly.<sup>25</sup>

## Attacks on Australia

- 4.33 One of the most obvious scenarios that is the subject of analysis is an attack on Australia. An attack on Australia could occur at different intensity and for different objectives. The *2000 White Paper* dealt with these scenarios in detail. Three types of scenarios were discussed including:

- a full-scale invasion of Australia;
- a major attack on Australia; and
- minor attacks on Australia.

- 4.34 In relation to ‘a full-scale invasion of Australia’ the *2000 White Paper* stated that ‘it is the least likely military contingency Australia might face’ and ‘no country has either the intent or the ability to undertake such a massive task.’<sup>26</sup> In relation to the possibility of ‘a major attack on Australia’ aimed at seizing and holding Australian territory, the *2000 White Paper* stated that this ‘remains only a remote possibility.’<sup>27</sup> The *2000 White Paper*, in relation to ‘a major attack on Australia, stated:

The capabilities to undertake such an attack would be easier to develop than those needed for an invasion, especially if bases near Australia were accessible. Such developments are highly unlikely in our current strategic environment, but our defence planning cannot altogether dismiss the possibility that they might occur.<sup>28</sup>

- 4.35 In relation to ‘minor attacks on Australia’ aimed at harassing or embarrassing Australia, the *2000 White Paper* stated that these types of attacks ‘would be possible with the sorts of capabilities already in service

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24 Farrer, M. ‘Sukhois Could Change the Balance of Power’, *Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter*, June 2003, p. 10.

25 Mr Shane Carmody, Deputy Secretary, Department of Defence, *Transcript*, p. 307.

26 Department of Defence, *Defence 2000, Our Future Defence Force*, 2000, p. 23.

27 Department of Defence, *Defence 2000, Our Future Defence Force*, 2000, p. 23.

28 Department of Defence, *Defence 2000, Our Future Defence Force*, 2000, p. 23.

or being developed by many regional countries.<sup>29</sup> The *2000 White Paper*, in relation to the development of external military capabilities, stated:

A key factor in the evolution of Australia's strategic environment is the development of military capabilities in the Asia Pacific region. This will influence the relationships between countries in the region, and it is a critical issue to consider in deciding Australia's own future capability needs. In recent times, the Asia Pacific has seen the fastest growth of military capabilities in the world.<sup>30</sup>

4.36 During the hearings, the examinations discussed the relevance of emerging capabilities in the region. Dr Dupont commented that the only countries in the region that could threaten Australia were China, India and Indonesia. However Dr Dupont commented that 'none of those states would have the military capability to project force in a serious way onto the Australian mainland in the next 10 years.'<sup>31</sup> Professor Dibb and Mr Hugh White were both cautious about proclaiming that there was no threat to mainland Australia in 10 to 20 years.<sup>32</sup>

4.37 A further issue in making assessments about external capabilities is that the assessments must focus on future planning. Therefore, invariably long lead times are involved in strategic considerations. Mr Hugh White emphasised that Australian strategic planning cannot ignore time frames of 10 to 20 years. Mr Hugh White stated:

The key point in the position I have been putting forward is that the time frames we need to think of in these decisions are 10- and 20-year time frames, and I would not be very confident about our capacity to predict Australia's strategic environment 10 or 20 years from now.<sup>33</sup>

4.38 Defence acknowledged that it does take into account long lead times in developing capabilities but there are limitations on what can be achieved. Defence stated:

Certainly as you go further out to about the 10-year point in time, the question is: what are the capabilities you would want in place to be able to deal with an emerging risk? We do acknowledge those needs and we put a greater priority, as you go out towards the 10-year mark, towards the defence capability plan. So we are

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29 Department of Defence, *Defence 2000, Our Future Defence Force*, 2000, p. 24.

30 Department of Defence, *Defence 2000, Our Future Defence Force*, 2000, p. 24.

31 Dr Alan Dupont, *Transcript*, p. 138.

32 Mr Hugh White, Director, ASPI, *Transcript*, p. 29; Professor Paul Dibb, *Transcript*, p. 56.

33 Mr Hugh White, Director, ASPI, *Transcript*, p. 32.

taking that issue into account, but we frankly cannot afford, within the budgets that we have, to place a greater emphasis on some of those capabilities, given the priorities that the government places on the use of the ADF.<sup>34</sup>

## Terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and failing states

4.39 Some groups, in evidence, sought to focus capability modelling away from scenarios based on invasion to ones focusing on the ‘new strategic agenda.’ Dr Michael Evans summed this position up with the comment that if ‘small groups of radicals and terrorists can, in fact, wield the weapons of mass destruction or biological weapons and inflict the kind of damage which we saw on 9/11, then we are indeed looking at a very changed situation.’<sup>35</sup> The Australian Centre for Maritime Studies commented that the ‘great danger is no longer the threat of military invasion, but assaults on the complexity of our society.’<sup>36</sup>

4.40 Brigadier Jim Wallace argued that the issue of regional instability was a critical factor that should be taken into account when developing Australian strategy and capability. Brigadier Wallace stated:

We have an arc of instability—as it is being called more lately—out there and it goes right into the South Pacific. If something happens there and Australian nationals are under threat, it is not discretionary. You are going to have to provide a response. We do not have the capability to do that adequately at the moment because of the priorities within that maritime strategy. Again, as an intellectual straightjacket it is not describing what is actually going to happen.<sup>37</sup>

4.41 The potential risks posed by failing states in our region pose further dilemmas for Australian security. A feature of failing states is weak government institutions and, in particular, ineffective controls on people movement and internal security. ASPI, in relation to the Solomon Islands, prior to the regional assistance missions, commented:

...in the absence of effective government, our neighbour risks reverting, not to a pre-modern tropical paradise, but to a kind of post-modern badlands, ruled by criminals and governed by violence.

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34 Air Vice Marshal John Blackburn, Department of Defence, *Transcript*, p. 307.

35 Dr Michael Evans, *Transcript*, p. 60.

36 Mr Harold Adams, Australian Centre for Maritime Studies, *Transcript*, p. 109.

37 Brigadier Jim Wallace, *Transcript*, p. 149.

Does this matter to Australia? Yes, for two reasons. First, this kind of legal vacuum so close to our shores would make Australia significantly more vulnerable to transnational criminal operations based in or operating out of Solomon Islands—drug smuggling, gun-running, identify fraud and people smuggling, for example. Perhaps even terrorism: the weakness of security institutions means that Solomon Islands' capacity to monitor people movement is poor.<sup>38</sup>

- 4.42 The future and prosperity of Papua New Guinea (PNG) is another example in which Australia's security and interests are apparent. PNG's economy and law and order situation are currently experiencing difficult times. At the 15<sup>th</sup> Australia-PNG Ministerial Forum, held on 11 December 2003, policing, law and justice were key agenda issues. The Forum 'agreed that PNG's law and order situation, required immediate action so that all other potential gains would not be jeopardised'.<sup>39</sup> The Forum strongly endorsed the need for adequate budgetary allocations to the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary. In addition, the enhanced Australian cooperation package would include the placement of up to 230 Australian police personnel in PNG. Australia's aid program to PNG is an estimated annual expenditure of over \$300 million.<sup>40</sup>
- 4.43 The Government, through the February 2003 Defence Update, set out a range of responses 'to the salient features in our changing security environment: the emergence of new and more immediate threats from terrorism and increased concerns about the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.'<sup>41</sup>

## Conclusions

- 4.44 The purpose of this discussion is to outline the complexities involved in developing strategy based on identification and analysis of known and future capabilities. Strategy cannot be developed around the premise of seeking to identify threats. So the focus must be on emerging capabilities in the region.
- 4.45 There is a divergence in the evidence between what capabilities Defence planners should be focusing on. One position emphasises that conventional military capabilities that threaten Australian territory are

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38 Australian Strategic Policy Institute, *Our Failing Neighbour, Australia and the Future of Solomon Islands*, June 2003, pp. 13-14.

39 [http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/png/15\\_forum\\_joint\\_statement.html](http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/png/15_forum_joint_statement.html)

40 <http://www.aisaid.gov.au/country/papua.cfm>

41 Department of Defence, *Australia's National Security, A Defence Update 2003*, February 2003, p. 5.

paramount. Extremely long lead times are involved with this level of assessment. This position warns that it is impossible to determine what types of regional capabilities will emerge in 10 or 20 years so it would be folly to shift emphasis in Australia capability.

- 4.46 A second position suggests that the 'new strategic agenda' encompassing regional instability, failing states, and the terrorist threat posed by non-state adversaries are all issues that should be factored into strategy and capability development.
- 4.47 The committee does not believe it is case of either/or when addressing these challenges. Previous White Papers, for example, have acknowledged a range of defence objectives in addition to the defence of Australia. These views will be expanded on in the following sections which focus on Australia's maritime strategy and the key strategic objectives set out in the *2000 White Paper*.

## What is the nature of Australia's maritime strategy

- 4.48 One of the focal points of the inquiry is whether Australia has a modern maritime strategy. As previously stated, the *2000 White Paper* states:
- 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. That means we need a fundamentally maritime strategy.<sup>42</sup>
- 4.49 Chapter two describes the key concepts underpinning a modern maritime strategy. Briefly, maritime strategies involve the integration of sea, air and land forces operating jointly. Maritime strategies comprise, to varying degrees depending on military objectives, sea denial, sea control and power projection capabilities. The majority of evidence to the inquiry argues that Australia's maritime strategy is based around sea denial and, therefore, cannot deliver true sea control and power projection capabilities.
- 4.50 Commodore Alan Robertson commented that 'Australia's so-called maritime strategy is 'sea denial', only one of the three sea power missions of a complete maritime strategy' which is a 'classic approach to maritime strategy by continental powers.'<sup>43</sup> Similarly, Dr Alan Dupont suggested that the maritime strategy was essentially based on sea denial which involved highly capable maritime assets and

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42 Department of Defence, *Defence 2000, Our Future Defence Force*, 2000, p. 47.

43 Commodore Alan Robertson, *Submission 1*, p. 1.

layered defence. Dr Dupont commented that in 'layperson's terms, it was about stopping the bad guys getting here, and anyone who got here onto Australia would be mopped up by the Army.'<sup>44</sup> Future Directions International stated:

*Defence 2000: Our future Defence Force* states that we need a maritime strategy, which I believe is sound advice, but that is not what we have. What we have in effect is a continental strategy, which is more about defending the moat than comprehensively utilising our strategic geography to our advantage. The denial strategy mooted originally by Dibb was, in my view, fundamentally flawed and was more akin to a former Soviet Union or People's Republic of China continental strategic approach than that of the United States or Great Britain, who have historically and currently adopted a genuine maritime strategy.<sup>45</sup>

- 4.51 The previous quotation raises the historical influences that have shaped Australian military strategy. The point was made by some groups in evidence that Australia's 'continentalist' approach to strategy has precluded the adoption of a true maritime strategy. Dr Michael Evans stated:

Over the past five years Australia's development of a maritime concept of strategy has been hampered by attempts to make this concept fit the framework of 1980s continental geostrategy. As a result, our current maritime strategy is underdeveloped and distorted. In trying to mould opposing maritime and continental strategic concepts into a single intellectual framework, we have in many ways sought to reconcile the irreconcilable.<sup>46</sup>

- 4.52 Dr Alan Ryan commented that much of the debate about Australia's maritime strategy 'is still based on the now largely irrelevant, geographically based assumptions that governed Australia's national security debate during the industrial age, and specifically during the latter stages of the Cold War.'<sup>47</sup> Dr Alan Dupont characterises Australia's maritime strategy as a 'continentalist strategy with a maritime component' which 'focuses on sea denial.'<sup>48</sup> The Australian Defence Association (ADA) stated:

...in the sort of strategic environment in which we live what we need to look at in the context of our national capabilities is

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44 Dr Alan Dupont, *Transcript*, p. 133.

45 Mr Lee Cordner, Future Directions International, *Transcript*, p. 120.

46 Dr Michael Evans, *Transcript*, p. 58.

47 Dr Alan Ryan, *Transcript*, p. 65.

48 Dr Alan Dupont, *Transcript*, p. 132.

developing a range of military operations to operate at a distance. This is where the distinction between a genuine maritime strategy and a continental strategy comes in. If you limit yourself to a continental strategy—which essentially, in the *2000 White Paper* terms, is what we have done—then you don't have the capacity to exercise many options at greater distance, which you may need to do. At the moment the government has taken a decision to deploy forces to the Middle East. That is not in concept within the *2000 White Paper*.<sup>49</sup>

- 4.53 The ADA's comments above raise the link between strategy and capability. More about the influence of strategy on capability will be examined in Chapter five. At this stage, it is important to note some of the key capabilities that underpin each of the key missions of a maritime strategy. A sea denial strategy seeks to prevent an adversary from using a particular area of the world's oceans. In Australia's context the *2000 White Paper* articulates a strategy of denial of the sea-air gap to Australia's north. The capabilities that underpin this include surveillance and strike capabilities which seek to prevent an adversary from reaching the shore.
- 4.54 Sea control is a step up from sea denial in that it 'is an active role, requiring the elements of presence, reach and power which characterise maritime forces.'<sup>50</sup> Sea control may not be continuous and it may be conducted during non-wartime. A current example of sea control includes the RAN's operations in the Persian Gulf and Operation RELEX.<sup>51</sup>
- 4.55 Maritime power projection involves influencing events on the land from the sea. The Information Research Service (IRS) commented that the 'reach, poise and flexibility of maritime forces enable them to strike at the land from unexpected and/or advantageous directions, making them, in the words of Liddle-Hart 'the greatest strategic asset that a maritime nation can possess.'<sup>52</sup> The US Marine Corps concept of 'Operational Manoeuvre from the Sea' seeks to provide the capability and means 'to move directly from the ship to the objective on land by taking advantage of high-speed insertion capabilities such as the Advanced Amphibious Assault Vehicle and the MV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor.'<sup>53</sup> In relation to the US Marine Corps capabilities, the IRS stated:

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49 Mr Michael O'Connor, Australian Defence Association, *Transcript*, p. 242.

50 Information Research Service, *A Foundation Paper on Australia's Maritime Strategy*, October 2002, p. 24.

51 Information Research Service, *A Foundation Paper on Australia's Maritime Strategy*, p. 24.

52 Information Research Service, *A Foundation Paper on Australia's Maritime Strategy*, p. 25.

53 Information Research Service, *A Foundation Paper on Australia's Maritime Strategy*, p. 25.

...[advanced insertion] capabilities allow the US to maintain the capacity to perform forcible entry operations in high threat environments. Australia is not capable of performing such operations, and its much more modest doctrinal approach is encapsulated in the Manoeuvre Operations in the Littoral Environment (MOLE) Concept document. Nevertheless, the capacity to influence events inland in areas such as the South Pacific, as well as maintaining the capability to, for example, evacuate Australian civilians from a conflict situation, are important parts of Australia's maritime strategy.<sup>54</sup>

4.56 Defence's approach to Australia's maritime strategy focuses on defending Australia through achieving 'strategic control of Australia's maritime approaches.'<sup>55</sup> Defence stated that the concept of strategic control involves:

- A proactive strategy to maximise our freedom of manoeuvre in the air and sea approaches while denying freedom of action to a potential adversary.
- The ability to assert our will over an adversary in time and space, and deny an adversary's ability to position for, or conduct offensive operations against Australia and its interests.
- The projection of power into the region to support our national interests.<sup>56</sup>

4.57 In relation to offensive manoeuvre, Defence commented that 'amphibious and/or airborne operations would seek to lodge our forces in areas where little or no opposition would be encountered.'<sup>57</sup> Defence stated:

Because of the maritime-littoral nature of Australia's approaches, ADF operations in defending Australia are likely to place a heavy reliance on amphibious and strategic air, and sea transport capabilities to deploy and sustain forces.

Offensive manoeuvre operations would be supported by the ADF's amphibious and airlift capability. If required ADF assets could be significantly supplemented by chartered sealift and airlift, as occurred during the East Timor operation.<sup>58</sup>

4.58 Dr John Reeve commented that for a maritime country like Australia sea control is a critical mission capability. Dr Reeve explained that the concept of sea control is never absolute or permanent but will depend on the

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54 Information Research Service, *A Foundation Paper on Australia's Maritime Strategy*, pp. 25-26.

55 Department of Defence, *Submission 29*, p. 6.

56 Department of Defence, *Submission 29*, p. 6.

57 Department of Defence, *Submission 29*, p. 9.

58 Department of Defence, *Submission 29*, pp. 9-10.



strategic needs at the time. In relation to whether Australia has a sea control capability, Dr Reeve suggested that Australia does not against a major power but could against a lesser capability.<sup>59</sup> For example, a medium power seeks to create and keep under national control enough means of power to initiate and sustain coercive actions whose outcome will be the preservation of its vital interests. Small powers as nations are unable to guard their own interests without some form of external support and guarantee. Superpowers are unlikely to suffer direct challenges to their territory, their political independence or their national welfare.<sup>60</sup>

4.59 In relation to power projection capabilities, Dr Reeve stated:

One particular area we could think about very fruitfully is power projection capabilities against things like terrorist safe havens and so on. One might think about strike capabilities from naval assets or about the issues involved in replacing the LPAs, the *Manoora* and the *Kanimbla*. What sorts of joint capabilities are needed to enable power projection by land or infantry forces, for example, into the archipelago to the north if there were any suggestion of terrorist activity presence, safe haven or whatever? So those are the sorts of issues I would flag in relation to what you have said.<sup>61</sup>

4.60 Defence, in contrast to the majority of evidence, suggested that its capabilities did provide for the various missions of a maritime strategy. This extends to power projection. Defence stated:

Our military strategy seeks to achieve and maintain the initiative and to engage an adversary as far away from our territory as possible, but being able to exert strategic control over our maritime approaches is fundamental to Australia's defence and that of our immediate neighbourhood. Our current strategy for defending Australia and Contributing to the Security of the Immediate Neighbourhood envisages the employment of ADF maritime forces, mostly air and naval as well as special forces, to achieve strategic control of the maritime approaches. Other land forces would secure our power projection bases and respond to and defeat any incursions.<sup>62</sup>

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59 Dr John Reeve , *Transcript*, pp. 99-103.

60 Goldrick, J., 'The Role of the Medium Power Navy in the Twenty First Century', in Schwarz, J. et al, *Maritime Strategies in Asia*, White Lotus Press, Bangkok, 2002, p.57

61 Dr John Reeve , *Transcript*, pp. 100-101.

62 Department of Defence, *Submission 29*, p. 18.

- 4.61 The Chief of Navy indicated that for the ADF 'to undertake most of the objectives envisioned by the government, it will have to establish a certain level of sea control in order for its operations to succeed.'<sup>63</sup>

## Conclusions

- 4.62 A maritime strategy provides nations with the ability to influence events in the littoral together with traditional blue water maritime concepts of sea denial and sea control. The littoral is the areas to seaward of the coast which are susceptible to influence or support from the land and the areas inland from the coast which are susceptible to influence from the sea. The classic elements of a maritime strategy include sea denial, sea control and power projection. Maritime strategies involve air, sea and land forces operating jointly.
- 4.63 One of the focal debates of the inquiry is whether Australia has a modern maritime strategy. The *2000 White Paper* states that 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' which 'means we need a fundamentally maritime strategy.'<sup>64</sup>
- 4.64 The *2000 White Paper* further stated that 'although Australia's strategic posture is defensive, we would seek to attack hostile forces as far from our shores as possible—proactive operations.'<sup>65</sup> The *2000 White Paper* explains that this would be achieved through its strike capability which could be conducted by F/A-18s, P-3C aircraft, ships and submarines, and the use of special forces. Australia's strike capability, however, consists primarily of its fleet of F-111s. The *2000 White Paper* stated:
- We do not intend to seek a strike capability large enough to conduct sustained attack on an adversary's wider civil infrastructure; our capability would be focussed on an ability to attack those militarily significant targets that might be used to mount or support an attack on Australia.<sup>66</sup>
- 4.65 These strike capabilities, as described above, whilst constituting power projection represent a limited element of what constitutes 'power projection' as defined on pages six and seven of this report which focuses on power projection ashore. The purpose of maritime power, ultimately, is to influence more fully events on land.

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63 Vice Admiral Chris Ritchie, Department of Defence, *Transcript*, p. 4.

64 Department of Defence, *Defence 2000, Our Future Defence Force*, 2000, p. 47.

65 Department of Defence, *Defence 2000, Our Future Defence Force*, 2000, p. XI.

66 Department of Defence, *Defence 2000, Our Future Defence Force*, 2000, p. 92.

- 4.66 The majority of evidence, including that from senior defence analysts, claims that in practice Australia does not have a fully developed maritime strategy. The reason why this observation is so important is that a true maritime strategy can provide a nation with significant power to shape and influence strategic outcomes both in defence of Australia and in the regional community.
- 4.67 While these conclusions are focused on commenting on strategy, the committee accepts that the ADF, with its present capabilities, can conduct sea denial and sea control missions. In addition, the ADF does have some power projection capabilities. More about capability will be discussed in the next chapter.
- 4.68 The debate surrounding these matters is not complete without examining Australia's key strategic task of defending Australia. Many of the groups that question the ADF's ability to conduct sea control and power projection missions are in effect criticising the primacy of Australia's strategic task of defending Australia. Defending Australia can be achieved primarily through a sea denial strategy. The evidence suggests that the preoccupation with defending Australia has prevented Australia from achieving a true maritime strategy. This debate is examined in more detail in the next section.

## The Defence of Australia

### *The 2000 White Paper and the 2003 Defence Update*

- 4.69 The *2000 White Paper* sets out Australia's key strategic interests and objectives in order of importance. These strategic objectives, shown below, aim to:
- ensure the Defence of Australia and its direct approaches;
  - foster the security of our immediate neighbourhood;
  - work with others to promote stability and cooperation in Southeast Asia;
  - contribute in appropriate ways to maintaining strategic stability in the wider Asia Pacific region, and
  - support Global Security.<sup>67</sup>
- 4.70 These strategic objectives are in turn supported by Australian military strategy. The *2000 White Paper* identifies four priority tasks for the ADF:

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<sup>67</sup> *Defence 2000, Our Future Defence Force*, 2000, p. X.

- the defence of Australia, as stated in the *2000 White Paper*, is shaped by three principles:
  - ⇒ we must be able to defend Australia without relying on the combat forces of other countries – self-reliance;
  - ⇒ Australia needs to be able to control the air and sea approaches to our continent – a maritime strategy; and
  - ⇒ although Australia's strategic posture is defensive, we would seek to attack hostile forces as far from our shores as possible – proactive operations;
- the second priority for the ADF is contributing to the security of our immediate neighbourhood;
- the third priority for Australian forces is supporting Australia's wider interests and objectives by being able to contribute effectively to international coalitions of forces to meet crises beyond our immediate neighbourhood; and
- in addition to these core tasks in support of Australia's strategic objectives, the ADF will also be called upon to undertake a number of regular or occasional tasks in support of peacetime national tasks.<sup>68</sup>

4.71 In March 2003 the Government released an update on the Defence *2000 White Paper*. The 2003 Update concluded that 'while the principles set out in the Defence *2000 White Paper* remain sound, some rebalancing of capability and expenditure will be necessary to take account of changes in Australia's strategic environment.'<sup>69</sup> The key focus of the 2003 Update was the rise of global terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) which 'have emerged to new prominence and create renewed strategic uncertainty.'<sup>70</sup> In addition, the Defence Update examined some of the key challenges faced by certain countries in our region.<sup>71</sup>

4.72 It should be noted that the order of the military tasks listed above are the base for acquiring new equipment. Therefore, the defence of Australia (DOA) is the key determinant for acquiring new equipment. The IRS commented that since 9-11 this has been relaxed 'but it is still the case that most acquisitions are justified on their contribution to the DOA task.'<sup>72</sup> Professor Dibb supported this view with the comment that '90 per cent of the capabilities in the Defence Capability Plan endorsed in this document are what is called defence of Australia, to use Department of Defence

<sup>68</sup> *Defence 2000, Our Future Defence Force*, 2000, pp. XI-XII.

<sup>69</sup> *Australia's National Security, A Defence Update*, March 2003, pp. 5-6.

<sup>70</sup> *Australia's National Security, A Defence Update*, March 2003, p. 7.

<sup>71</sup> *Australia's National Security, A Defence Update*, March 2003, pp. 18-22.

<sup>72</sup> Information Research Service, *A Foundation Paper on Australia's Maritime Strategy*, p. 19.

language, and 10 per cent are what is called inner arc, including troop lift helicopters and so on.<sup>73</sup>

## Defence of Australia versus other priorities?

4.73 Criticisms were raised in evidence about the overemphasis on DOA. These critics claim this has resulted in a capability mix which is limiting the ADF's ability to perform the wide variety of tasks that it does in practice. Second, as suggested in the previous section, the over emphasis with DOA has led to an incomplete maritime strategy.

4.74 During hearings, Defence confirmed the priority of DOA. Defence stated:

In the broadest sense, Australia's defence strategic policy aims to prevent or defeat any armed attack on Australia. It seeks to do this by defending Australia and its direct approaches, by contributing to the security of the immediate neighbourhood, by supporting our wider interests through peacetime national tasks and by shaping the strategic environment.<sup>74</sup>

4.75 Mr Hugh White, an author of the *2000 White Paper*, confirmed that the maritime strategy as discussed in the *2000 White Paper* relates to DOA. Mr White commented that the 'core of our capacity to undertake defence of Australia relates to our capacity to deny our air and maritime approaches to hostile forces.'<sup>75</sup>

4.76 A range of witnesses questioned the priority given to DOA. The point was made that the threat of direct attack on Australia was minimal and therefore planning for this event was having an adverse affect on capability choices. Dr Dupont stated:

No-one would dispute that the primary role of the Defence Force must be to defend Australia. It is self-evident; it is a motherhood statement. The key question is 'Defend it against what?' My first criticism of the DOA strategy, as we have seen it develop, is that it is too narrowly focused on one kind of threat and that it is focused narrowly geographically, to the approaches to the continent. While you cannot rule out those kinds of threats—and I am certainly not inclined to do that—you have to make judgments about whether that is the most urgent and most serious threat that we are likely to face and whether that should be the determining principle for configuring our defence forces for the challenges of this century.

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73 Professor Paul Dibb, *Transcript*, p. 47.

74 Mr Shane Carmody, Deputy Secretary, Department of Defence, *Transcript*, p. 2.

75 Mr Hugh White, Director, ASPI, *Transcript*, p. 27.

That is the question I pose to you. I do not think that strategy has much utility today.<sup>76</sup>

- 4.77 The Australian Defence Association (ADA) also indicated reservations with the focus on DOA stating that it was not 'significant.'<sup>77</sup> The ADA pointed to the lessons of history commenting that a grave mistake was made in allowing adversaries to control forward operating bases within striking range of Australian territory. The ADA concluded that our strategic objectives should seek to prevent this type of occurrence.<sup>78</sup> The ADA went further by suggesting that the primary strategic objective of DOA 'is better achieved by pursuing the *2000 White Papers*' second strategic priority, that of contributing to the security of our immediate neighbourhood.'<sup>79</sup> In relation to this point, the ADA stated:

Focussing on that strategic priority not only actually ensures that the primary strategic objective is attained but also that our forces are prioritised for a more likely contingency than a direct attack on Australian territory. In any event, the capabilities developed for and the experience gained in pursuing the former priority would support the strategy of defence of the mainland. The opposite is not necessarily true.<sup>80</sup>

- 4.78 During the hearings, the ADA explained that it did not have an argument with the DOA objective but it did have criticisms of the strategy by which you achieve that objective. The ADA's response was that the best strategy of achieving DOA was to ensure that the ADF could operate effectively and shape outcomes in the region. The ADA stated:

...if you focus on being able to project your forces out into the region and operate them there, that is where the first challenge is likely to come from, not the second challenge. By doing that, you actually achieve your first primary objective. Again, it is the difference between strategic objective and strategy. Your strategy needs to be to get our there and neutralise any challenge to Australia and its interests out there.<sup>81</sup>

- 4.79 The ADA suggested that the achievement of a safer more stable and secure region will have flow on effects for Australia's security. For example, if countries in Australia's region cannot achieve adequate levels of law and order then this is of particular concern as terrorists may utilise

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76 Dr Alan Dupont, *Transcript*, pp. 133-134.

77 Mr Michael O'Connor, Australian Defence Association, *Transcript*, p. 247.

78 Mr Michael O'Connor, Australian Defence Association, *Transcript*, p. 247.

79 Australian Defence Association, *Submission 5*, p. 4.

80 Australian Defence Association, *Submission 5*, p. 5.

81 Mr Michael O'Connor, Australian Defence Association, *Transcript*, p. 253.

the instability that results to establish bases from which they can launch WMD style attacks on Australia directly or on Australian expatriates in the vulnerable inner arc of regional countries.

- 4.80 ASPI also discussed the potential for failing states to be breeding grounds for transnational crime and even harbour terrorists. ASPI, as part of its report on the Solomon Islands stated:

Without an effective government upholding the rule of law and controlling its borders, Solomon Islands risks becoming—and has to some extent already become—a petri dish in which transnational and non-state security threats can develop and breed...

Does this matter to Australia? Yes, for two reasons. First, this kind of legal vacuum so close to our shores would make Australia significantly more vulnerable to transnational criminal operations based in or operating out of Solomon Islands—drug smuggling, gun-running, identity fraud and people smuggling, for example. Perhaps even terrorism...<sup>82</sup>

- 4.81 Australia's level of aid to the Solomon Islands, as at budget 2003/04, is \$87.4 million comprising \$37.4 expected aid flows, \$25 million for the additional economic assistance package, and \$25 million for the additional criminal justice package.<sup>83</sup> The cost of Operation Anode, which is the ADF's contribution to the regional assistance mission to the Solomon Islands, is \$111.1 million in 2003-04. The forward estimate for 2004-05 is \$22.2 million.<sup>84</sup> The Australian Federal Police (AFP) received funding of \$97.012 million, including \$16.674 million capital funding, to assist in the restoration of law and order in the Solomon Islands. Funding for the AFP in 2004-05 will be determined in the next budget.<sup>85</sup> The total level of Australian expenditure for the Solomon Islands including aid and operating costs for the ADF and AFP for 2003-04 is \$295.51 million.

- 4.82 The potential for increased terrorist activity in the region raised the risks associated with WMD attacks. Dr Dupont stated:

...it has been stated quite explicitly by some of our defence policy makers in the past—that, sure, we accept that a military attack against Australia is not likely, but we put a lot of store in it because, if it does occur, it is going to be the most serious threat to

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82 ASPI, *Our Failing Neighbour, Australia and the Future of Solomon Islands*, An ASPI Policy Report, June 2003, pp. 13-14.

83 <http://www.aisaid.gov.au/country/country.cfm?CountryId=16>

84 Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements, 2003-04, Defence Portfolio, February 2004, p. 9.

85 Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements, 2003-04, Attorney-General's Portfolio, February 2004, p. 122.

Australia. I would contest that as well. I can think of a number of scenarios that are not related to conventional military attacks which would be just as serious, if not more serious. A classic example would be a WMD attack on Australia by terrorist groups or by rogue states. That is a hell of a lot more likely than it was 10 years ago. We need to broaden our thinking about the nature of the threats that we are facing.<sup>86</sup>

- 4.83 In contrast to groups that were critical of the emphasis placed on DOA, there were a range of groups that resisted these arguments. The Royal United Service Institute, NSW, suggested that the *2000 White Paper* 'got it pretty right.'<sup>87</sup> Mr Hugh White suggested that the priority given to DOA, even though current threat levels were low, was valid because the consequences 'are very serious if they occur.'<sup>88</sup> Mr White stated:

I do not believe that you can plan the defence of this country on the basis that defending the continent against conventional military attack in the 10- to 20-year time frame is no longer a priority. I think it remains the core of our defence responsibilities. I would therefore argue against any reduction in the priority for air and maritime capabilities.<sup>89</sup>

- 4.84 Mr White, while acknowledging that the threat of a conventional attack to Australia was low, suggested that it was not possible to be certain about events in the future. He described a scenario where, in the event that the US became embroiled in a dispute leading to confrontation with China over Taiwan, Australia could become involved through its alliance with the US. Mr White stated:

If we found ourselves siding with the United States in military operations against China, I would not want to be advising a government that we could be absolutely sure that China would not undertake operations against Australia. Let me be clear. Do I predict that? No. Do I think that is likely? No. But would I be prepared to say that we could plan Australia's defence on the proposition that that will not happen? No, I would not.<sup>90</sup>

- 4.85 Professor Dibb also supported the priority given to DOA and warned that any change in Australia's strategic objectives could seriously undermine capability which takes many years to achieve. Professor Dibb stated:

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86 Dr Alan Dupont, *Transcript*, p. 135.

87 Brigadier David Leece, Royal United Service Institute of Australia, NSW, *Transcript*, p. 221.

88 Mr Hugh White, Director, ASPI, *Transcript*, p. 41.

89 Mr Hugh White, Director, ASPI, *Transcript*, p. 29.

90 Mr Hugh White, Director, ASPI, *Transcript*, p. 33.



Anybody who proclaims to me that there is no threat for 15 years is complacent, particularly in the light of developing strategic circumstances. That is not to identify a direct military threat here and now, but it is to say that if you strip away capabilities like, for instance, air warfare destroyers, or submarines, replacing that capability—as the New Zealanders are about to find out—is a no-go area. It is a 30-year job to replace. So my view is, yes, revisit the Army in a modest way, but do not go stripping the other elements of what is a carefully balanced, high-tech force structure that is vital for keeping the knowledge edge over the region.<sup>91</sup>

- 4.86 Some of the witnesses that have been concerned about the priority given to DOA have suggested that the key strategic priority for Australia should be wider. They argue that the ‘Defence of Australia and its interests’ would provide a better strategic objective. Mr Alastair Cooper stated:

Australia’s military maritime strategy must, I believe, be understood and framed within the context of the defence of Australia and its interests. These interests extend beyond the air-sea gap and the Australian exclusive economic zone. They reach throughout the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. By this, I do not intend to demean the importance of the defence of Australian territory—it is, after all, of fundamental interest. However, the effects of globalisation mean that we have interests in many parts of the world. If you accept that the responsibility of the Australian Defence Organisation is to represent Australia’s interests as directed by the government, then it follows that the Australian Defence Organisation must have a commensurate capability. In brief, how would the Australian Defence Organisation represent Australia’s interests? Essentially by showing the willingness and the capability of the Australian government to influence events in its vicinity and throughout the region.<sup>92</sup>

- 4.87 Dr Evans shared a similar view commenting that ‘Australia will need to shift its strategic thinking away from prescriptive strategic analysis that is based solely on defending territory towards scenario based analysis that takes much greater account of the defence of non-territorial interests.’<sup>93</sup>
- 4.88 The current Chief of Army, Lieutenant General Peter Leahy, has addressed a range of issues in the public debate about DOA versus other

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91 Professor Paul Dibb, *Transcript*, p. 56.

92 Mr Alastair Cooper, *Transcript*, pp. 184-185.

93 Dr Michael Evans, *Transcript*, p. 59.

priorities.<sup>94</sup> General Leahy argues that there cannot be an 'either/or' debate about DOA and other defence priorities. Rather, the ADF should be capable of performing both. In achieving this outcome, General Leahy promotes the need for 'joint' operations and supports the acquisition of expensive capital equipment such as air warfare destroyers, airborne early warning aircraft, and fighter and strike platforms. General Leahy stated:

What I am proposing is a joint package of Naval, Land and Air Forces capable of deploying, supporting, sustaining and redeploying a joint force wherever we are directed to go by government. This force would have utility in the defence of Australia, in our region as demonstrated in Timor, or further a field as demonstrated in Somalia, and currently in the war against terror. In the December 2000 *White Paper* we were given guidance that our previous focus on low-level contingencies on Australian territory was to be broadened to meet a wider range of contingencies, both on Australian territory and beyond.<sup>95</sup>

4.89 General Leahy suggested that the current *2000 White Paper* has provided for Army to develop 'an expeditionary, or offshore capability'.<sup>96</sup> This was, however, after a period in which the focus on continental defence had 'eroded' Army's core capabilities. General Leahy explained that under the DOA strategy, it was assumed that forces structured for continental defence 'could routinely perform other tasks.' General Leahy categorically disputes this assumption:

That guidance ultimately diminished Army's core capabilities. Over time we lost strategic agility. Our units became hollow. Our ability to operate away from the Australian support base degraded dangerously. Our capacity to generate, sustain and rotate forces eroded.

The tremendous efforts of all of the Australian Defence Force in East Timor concealed these deficiencies in the Army's capabilities. But we learnt some important lessons during that deployment. We needed increased readiness, enhanced mobilisation, capabilities, more and better strategic lift, improved logistics, improved engineering capability, better mobility, improved long range

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94 Chief of Army, Lieutenant General Peter Leahy, AO, Defence Watch Seminar, Canberra, 19 November 2002, *Defender*, Summer 2002; and 'A Land Force for the Future, The Australian Army in the Early 21<sup>st</sup> Century', *Australian Army Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2003.

95 Leahy, Lieutenant General Peter, Defence Watch Seminar, Canberra, 19 November 2002, *Defender*, Summer 2002 p. 9.

96 Leahy, Lieutenant General Peter, Defence Watch Seminar, Canberra, 19 November 2002, *Defender*, Summer 2002 p. 10.

communications and an ability to win water, distribute fuel over the shore as well as improved stevedoring and medical services.<sup>97</sup>

- 4.90 General Leahy suggests that the 2000 *White Paper* responded to the lessons of East Timor by acknowledging that the Army was part of the maritime strategy and that the maritime approaches to Australia consisted of an 'air-sea-land gap'.<sup>98</sup>
- 4.91 In relation to how this approach sits with DOA, General Leahy asserts that the 'ability to operate both onshore and offshore is defence of Australia.'<sup>99</sup> To this end, General Leahy explains that the Army has already begun its transition from a force structured for continental defence 'to a more agile, scalable and versatile force.'<sup>100</sup> The concept of littoral manoeuvre is a key part of this development and embraces the Army's adoption of the concept of Manoeuvre Operations in the Littoral Environment (MOLE). General Leahy commented that 'Army strongly believes that joint forces capable of littoral manoeuvre provide the best capability for the defence of Australia.'<sup>101</sup>
- 4.92 General Leahy clearly expresses the view that continental defence is not the best strategy for the defence of Australia. General Leahy stated:
- There is consensus that Australia cannot be secure in an insecure region or an insecure world. The tragic events of Bali reinforce that realisation. Land forces capable of rapid deployment and decisive effect are a core element of the solution to the suite of strategic problems likely to emerge in the future.
- Forces designed solely to deny the sea-air gap to a conventional invasion lack the versatility, and scalability to carry out the diverse functions likely to be required in the future.<sup>102</sup>
- 4.93 It needs to be recognised that were Australia's defence strategy to be shifted in the direction suggested by critics then the costs of regional operations could be extremely high. These critics need to acknowledge this and they should explain the types of scenarios that Australian forces

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97 Leahy, Lieutenant General Peter, Defence Watch Seminar, Canberra, 19 November 2002, *Defender*, Summer 2002 p. 10.

98 Leahy, Lieutenant General Peter, Defence Watch Seminar, Canberra, 19 November 2002, *Defender*, Summer 2002 p. 10.

99 Leahy, Lieutenant General Peter, Defence Watch Seminar, Canberra, 19 November 2002, *Defender*, Summer 2002 p. 11.

100 Leahy, Lieutenant General Peter, Defence Watch Seminar, Canberra, 19 November 2002, *Defender*, Summer 2002 p. 11.

101 Leahy, Lieutenant General Peter, Defence Watch Seminar, Canberra, 19 November 2002, *Defender*, Summer 2002 p. 11.

102 Leahy, Lieutenant General Peter, Defence Watch Seminar, Canberra, 19 November 2002, *Defender*, Summer 2002 p. 11.

could operate in, either in support of coalition operations or in high risk environments without the support of allies.

## Self-reliance

4.94 As explained previously, Australia's number one strategic objective is the defence of Australia and its direct approaches. The ADF approach to achieving this objective is shaped by three principles, the first of which mentions the need for self-reliance:

- we must be able to defend Australia without relying on the combat forces of other countries – self-reliance.<sup>103</sup>

4.95 The meaning of self-reliance in the context of DOA and the implications self-reliance has for Australian capability development was examined. Defence acknowledged that in achieving self-reliance there is a need to balance self-reliance with the need to be interoperable. Defence stated:

We have been seeking to be as self-reliant as we can be, but we acknowledge also that we need to develop capabilities that both allow us to be self-reliant and allow us to interoperate. Therefore, it again comes back to a balance issue, but ultimately...we need to be as self-reliant as we can afford to be.<sup>104</sup>

4.96 Defence indicated that where they have least discretion to act, then this is where they would wish to have as much self-reliance as possible. From this perspective, Defence argued that self-reliance was a 'reasonable objective.'<sup>105</sup> Professor Dibb commented that for threats below that of invasion, Australia should 'seek to develop the combat forces—whether you call them the maritime strategy or something else—that would not depend upon American combat troops coming over the hill.'<sup>106</sup> However, Professor Dibb did suggest that with this type of scenario Australia would depend on the US 'for resupply of missiles, intelligence, access and so on.'<sup>107</sup>

4.97 The ADA suggested that there was confusion around the meaning of self-reliance and indicated that the concept was connected with the objective of DOA. The ADA stated:

I think that self-reliance, as a strict term, is very much related to the continental strategy of defending Australian territory, and I think this is essentially where it was developed. We saw the

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103 *Defence 2000, Our Future Defence Force*, 2000, p. XI.

104 Mr Shane Carmody, Deputy Secretary, Department of Defence, *Transcript*, p. 24.

105 Mr Shane Carmody, Deputy Secretary, Department of Defence, *Transcript*, p. 25 & p. 278.

106 Professor Paul Dibb, *Transcript*, p. 51.

107 Professor Paul Dibb, *Transcript*, p. 51.

challenge as defending Australian territory and nothing more than that. I do not believe that that was ever realistic for us. It was an artificial concept.<sup>108</sup>

- 4.98 Similarly, Dr Evans commented that he could not ‘see a contingency where Australia would have to act completely alone’ and Australia ‘would always count on the ANZUS alliance.’<sup>109</sup>
- 4.99 The committee notes that the formulation of self reliance by successive Governments has always noted that the concept has been one of self reliance within the existing framework of alliances.

### **‘Disconnect’ between strategy and roles?**

- 4.100 An issue that arose during hearings was the claim that the key strategic task of DOA did not adequately reflect what the ADF actually does. Critics suggest that there is a disconnect between the priorities set out in strategy and the roles the ADF is asked to perform. Australia’s strategic objectives are achieved through defence strategy which is, in turn, underpinned by capability. The implication arising from those groups that claim there is a ‘disconnect between strategy and capability is that if strategy does not reflect required roles then the available capabilities may be inadequate for the jobs that the ADF is frequently asked to do.
- 4.101 Dr Dupont questioned the premise that the current ADF capability is in fact suitable for the complete and diverse range of tasks that the ADF is asked to perform. Dr Dupont indicated that the ADF, in the last 15 years, has been involved in a range of deployments that have no relevance to DOA. Dr Dupont stated:

You get to the point where, if the ADF is continually doing certain kinds of things and they are not recognised in the doctrine, you need to look at that. You start to see a mismatch between the security challenges you are facing and what your strategy is all about. If it was only an occasional deployment offshore, on peacekeeping operations, on constabulary tasks or all these other things, you could argue, ‘Sure, we can do that with a force primarily structured to defend Australia.’ But you get to a point where the ADF has, to a great degree, been deployed not only further a field than the sea-air gap but also on a range of tasks that are not really seen as central to our strategy, or have not been until now. The strategy has not really accommodated the diversity in

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108 Mr Michael O’Connor, Australian Defence Association, *Transcript*, p. 246.

109 Dr Michael Evans, *Transcript*, p. 61.

the deployments of the ADF over the last 10 or 12 years, and we need to do a bit more about that in our strategy.<sup>110</sup>

- 4.102 In opposition to this, the supporters of DOA argue that the capability mix that has been developed to implement DOA can be effectively used for lower order tasks. Mr White points to the example of East Timor where he acknowledges that there were some pressures but Australia 'had the forces available to do it.'<sup>111</sup> Mr White discussed a range of examples where Australian forces were used effectively for alternative tasks:

We decided that we wanted to evacuate Australians from the Solomons a couple of years ago. We had the forces to do it. The government has decided that it wants to be in a position, if the circumstances evolve, to make a contribution in Iraq. We have the forces to do it. So I do not think one can argue for a major change in our force structure on the basis that we do not have available from the forces we are developing the capabilities we need to support the national security strategy in broad terms.<sup>112</sup>

- 4.103 While the ADF was able to fulfil its objectives during its deployment to East Timor, some groups in evidence suggested that there were significant limitations revealed through the deployment. These groups suggest that the East Timor operation succeeded because of its proximity to Darwin and the support of coalition strategic lift and logistical transport. Dr Alan Ryan stated:

There is a point beyond which we cannot expect to conduct an independent maritime strategy. It is arguable that this point is somewhere in the middle of the Timor Sea. Our experience deploying the international force to East Timor in 1999 demonstrated that, given current capabilities, the Australia Defence Force possesses limited capacity to project military power. Without coalition strategic lift and coalition logistical transport capabilities Australia could not even have sustained that effort. What is more, we were only able to conduct the operations because our Black Hawks could deploy themselves from Darwin.<sup>113</sup>

- 4.104 Dr Ryan points out that if the East Timor operation had been several hundred kilometres from the Australian mainland then the ADF would not have been able to conduct this scale of operation. Dr Ryan commented that 'we could not have carried out air medical evacuations and we could

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110 Dr Alan Dupont, *Transcript*, pp. 134.

111 Mr Hugh White, Director, ASPI, *Transcript*, p. 35.

112 Mr Hugh White, Director, ASPI, *Transcript*, p. 35.

113 Dr Alan Ryan, *Transcript*, p. 66.

not have established the air presence in and around Dili that was necessary to be able to suppress military activity.<sup>114</sup> Dr Evans also indicated that the East Timor operation proceeded with ‘significant American assistance.’<sup>115</sup>

4.105 Brigadier Jim Wallace, the Director-General of Land Development during the East Timor operation, was similarly critical of the ADF’s capabilities which undermined ADF effectiveness during the East Timor crisis.<sup>116</sup> The ADA commented that the East Timor operation showed ‘just how limited our capabilities are.’<sup>117</sup> The current Chief of Army, General Leahy noted that the East Timor operation tested the ADF’s capabilities and it was only due to the tremendous effort by the ADF which ‘concealed these deficiencies in the Army’s capabilities.’<sup>118</sup>

4.106 Professor Dibb is dismissive of the claims that there is a disconnect between strategy and roles. Professor Dibb stated:

There is a naive and simplistic view around that there is a conflict between practice and doctrine. There are some views about that and you will hear some of those later. Yet within the force structure we have developed under successive governments within a very limited budget—1.9 per cent of GDP. We have deployed 5,000-plus troops to East Timor—and people have forgotten the 1,200 troops deployed to Somalia in 1993—and there was Angola, Cambodia and so on. I am well aware of the difficulties, particularly in the East Timor operation, and how it stretched us—and deficiencies in logistics and simple issues like water and fuel. But imagine those who in the mid-eighties were absolutely against moving an Army brigade and supporting aviation and armour, and indeed Navy and Air Force elements, to the north of Australia. Where would we have been without that forward deployment? Whether you call it a maritime strategy or something else, we need to remember these issues.<sup>119</sup>

4.107 A brief examination of the ADF’s current deployments shows that it is extremely active in operations outside Australia. As at September 2003 the ADF had 3600 personnel involved in operations that include border

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114 Dr Alan Ryan, *Transcript*, p. 66.

115 Dr Michael Evans, *Transcript*, p. 61.

116 Brigadier Jim Wallace, *Transcript*, p. 153.

117 Mr Michael O’Connor, Australian Defence Association, *Transcript*, p. 247.

118 Leahy, Lieutenant General Peter, Defence Watch Seminar, Canberra, 19 November 2002, *Defender*, Summer 2002 p. 10.

119 Professor Paul Dibb, *Transcript*, p. 45.

protection, United Nations operations and coalition operations.<sup>120</sup> Table 4.2 shows the range of deployments and the approximate number of ADF personnel involved in late 2003.

Table 4.2 ADF Global Operations – September 2003

Operation	Location	Objective	ADF Personnel
Catalyst	Middle East	Australia's contribution to the rehabilitation of Iraq	800
Osier	Bosnia	Operation Osier is Australia's contribution to the NATO-led, UN mandated Yugoslavia Security Force (SFOR) and Kosovo Force (KFOR).	8
Mazurka	Sinai	Australia's contribution to the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) in the Sinai. The MFO was established in 1981 to oversee the Camp David Accords of 1978 and the Egypt/Israel Peace Treaty of 1979.	25
Pomelo	Eritrea and Ethiopia	The UNMEE mission includes monitoring the cessation of hostilities, troop deployments and the temporary security zone between the two countries	2
Paladin	Middle East	Australia's contribution to the UN Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO). UNTSO was established in 1948 to supervise the truce agreed at the conclusion of the first Arab/Israeli War and operates in Israel, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt.	11
Palate	UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan	Following the ADF's significant and successful role in Afghanistan as part of the International Coalition Against Terrorism, the ADF now provides one Army officer who is deployed as a military liaison officer to the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).	1
Mistral	Southern Ocean	The Australian Defence Force supports Coastwatch and AFMA by providing support to the civil agencies enforcing Australian sovereign rights and fisheries laws in the Southern Oceans.	
Relex II	Australian border protection	This is the Australian Defence Force operation which contributes to the whole of government program to detect, intercept and deter vessels carrying unauthorised arrivals from entering Australia through the North-West maritime approaches.	
Citadel	East Timor	Australia contributes about 1000 personnel to the UN Mission in Support of East Timor (UNMISET). UNMISET was established by UN resolution 1272/99 on 25 October 2000 and implemented on East Timor's Independence Day, 20 May	1000

120 see Defence website at <http://www.defence.gov.au>



Operation	Location	Objective	ADF Personnel
Cranberry	Northern Australia and Sea Air Approaches	2002. This is Northern Australia's sea, air and land surveillance program, undertaken primarily by RAN Fremantle Class Patrol Boats and Army Reserve personnel from the Regional Force Surveillance Unit, in support of civil agencies such as Coastwatch and Customs, to detect illegal activity such as smuggling and illegal fishing.	
Anode	Solomon Islands	Operation Anode is the ADF's contribution to the Australian led Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands known as Operation HELPEM FREN. The Australian contribution comprises about 1500 Australian Defence Force personnel, 155 Australian Federal Police and 90 personnel from the Australian Protective Service to the multinational stabilisation force.	1500
Slipper	Middle East	Operation Slipper is Australia's contribution to the war against terrorism. A RAAF AP-3C Orion detachment is conducting maritime patrol operations, with one aircraft and associated command and support elements supporting both the rehabilitation operation in Iraq and the Coalition operation against terrorism	

Source Defence Website: <http://www.defence.gov.au>

4.108 Table 4.2 shows a range of operations that the ADF is involved in 2003. This list is indicative of the types of operations that the ADF has been involved in during the past decade and even longer. In 1994 the committee conducted an inquiry into Australia's participation in peacekeeping. Appendix 5 of that report listed Australia's participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations between 1948 and 1993.<sup>121</sup> Some of the larger Australian peacekeeping commitments includes Rwanda in 1993, Cambodia between 1991-93 and Namibia in 1989.

## Conclusions

4.109 The debate about defence of Australia versus 'other priorities' has, in recent years, featured prominently in academia and the wider defence community. The committee agrees with the Chief of Army that this cannot be an 'either or' debate. Australia's defence strategy must be able to provide effectively for the defence of Australia but also our wider interests.

121 Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, *Australia's Participation in Peacekeeping*, AGPS, Canberra, 1994.

- 4.110 Defence White Papers since 1987 have emphasised the Defence of Australia and have listed a range of lower order priorities. For example, the 1987 White Paper listed eight national defence interests. The first two are listed below:
- the defence of Australian territory and society from threat of military attack; and
  - the protection of Australian interests in the surrounding maritime areas, our island territories, and our proximate ocean areas and focal points.
- 4.111 Moving through to the 2000 Defence White Paper, five key strategic objectives were listed. The first two are shown below:
- ensure the Defence of Australia and its direct approaches; and
  - foster the security of our immediate neighbourhood.
- 4.112 Defence White Papers since 1987 have always given primacy to the Defence of Australia task. This is demonstrated through the fact that the key determinant for defence spending on capability was for the defence of Australia task. For example, the 1994 White Paper stated:
- Important as these international and domestic activities are for Australia, they do not determine the force structure of the Australian Defence Force. The structure of the Defence Force is determined by its essential roles in providing for the defence of Australia.<sup>122</sup>
- 4.113 The rationale of successive White Papers was that capability acquired for the Defence of Australia task would be suitable for other roles in support of Australia's wider interests. The current Chief of Army (CA) and other groups in evidence suggested that this approach, in particular, diminished the Army's capability to operate offshore. The East Timor deployment, for example, revealed a range of deficiencies which the ADF is seeking to remedy.
- 4.114 In relation to these comments, the committee believes that the rationale of previous White Papers taken together with constrained defence budgets produced the circumstances alluded to by the CA and other witnesses. The committee believes that previous White Papers have been broadly correct in developing strategy and capability around the defence of Australia task based on the strategic challenges of the time and limited budgets. This constrained what could be done to develop capabilities to undertake operations beyond our immediate region.

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122 Department of Defence, *Defending Australia, Defence White Paper*, 1994, p. 5.

- 4.115 With the end of the cold war and the rise of non-state adversaries is Australia's defence strategy based on defence of Australia still applicable? The committee believes that the defence of Australia, as a strategic objective, is correct. However, change is required to respond to new geopolitical and strategic developments. For example, the potential for failing states in Australia's region could present downstream risks. Failing states can suffer a breakdown of law and order which could lead to a rise in transnational crime. At worst failing states could become terrorist safe havens. Australia must be in a position, if it is requested, to assist nations in the region.
- 4.116 Previous White Papers have focused on being able to mount effective military operations in Australia's sea air gap. In building on these White Papers, Australia's defence strategy must now be focused on mounting effective military operations in Australia's sea air land gap so as to influence affairs in our region. An enhanced maritime strategy is therefore supported as it gives greater focus on capability necessary to defend Australia and its non-territorial interests particularly in our region.
- 4.117 The committee is not proposing a dismantling of the capability base that has arisen particularly as a result of the 1987 White Paper. The committee supports the continuation of the Collins class submarines, the acquisition of airborne early warning aircraft, air-to-air refuellers, air warfare destroyers and the replacement aircraft for the F/A-18 and F-111. However, more capability is needed to support Army, heavy lift and amphibious operations. These aspects of capability will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. At this point, it is important to recognise that this type of capability, as identified by the CA in paragraph 4.91, will go a long way to achieving a more effective maritime strategy for Australia.
- 4.118 In view of these conclusions, the committee recommends that Government develop in 2005-2006 a new Defence White Paper. From the introduction of this White Paper, 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 ADF 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 as recently demonstrated in the Solomon Islands. The new White Paper should explain how all three services will operate together to deliver Australia's maritime strategy.
- 4.119 The committee, in proposing the development of enhanced power projection capabilities, is not doing so for reasons of military expansion or

aggression. 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. In addition, there should be a realistic appreciation of the capacity of Australia's defence forces to operate effectively in high threat environments. Australia should not, for example, operate against a sovereign state without the support of allies.

- 4.120 The proposed new Defence White Paper should like previous White Papers provide a list of key strategic objectives. The committee recommends that Australia's most important long-term strategic objectives should 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. This proposal would ensure that more consideration would be given to Australia's interests beyond the sea-air gap and the Australian exclusive economic zone. This approach is consistent with the views expressed in the current foreign affairs and trade White Paper, *Advancing the National Interest* which stated:

Threats to Australia's security come not just from our region, but also from more distant points on the globe. As a consequence, the strategies we pursue to advance our national interest must be bilateral, regional and, increasingly, global.<sup>123</sup>

- 4.121 The views expressed in the Foreign Affairs White Paper further demonstrates the need to ensure that Australia's national security policy documents are consistent. A National Security Strategy, as described in Chapter three, should serve this role of integrating and bringing greater coherence to Australia's policy statements on national security.
- 4.122 A new strategic priority of 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 would have implications for defence expenditure. Previous White Papers such as the 1994 White Paper stated explicitly that expenditure on capability will be for the Defence of Australia task. The committee's proposal would provide more flexibility to the Government of the day and defence planners to ensure that future defence capability is shaped for the purpose of defending Australia and its non-territorial interests, and not just the defence of Australia task. This approach will provide more options for the ADF to ultimately defend Australia, its non-territorial interests and its

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123 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper, Advancing the National Interest*, 2003, National Capital Printing, p. ix.

people as we enter a complex and challenging strategic environment in which our interests are not determined by their degree of proximity to Australia's coastline.

- 4.123 In addition, the proposed new White Paper should include an explicit description of Australia's maritime strategy. This description should explain how all three services will operate together to deliver Australia's maritime strategy in defence of Australia and its interests. 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 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## Recommendation 2

- 4.124 **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.**