



DEFENCE POLICY

Regionals acknowledge that Defence is the constitutional responsibility of the Commonwealth Government and substantive policy that shall not be subordinate to or compromised by any other policy. The Defence Force is a lethal force protecting our nation and people, together with those of our allies', in accordance with any security treaties entered into.

While the Defence Force shall fulfil its role within the bound of international conventions, it will not be constrained or its personnel unnecessarily endangered by rules of engagement in excess for those conventions.

The Defence Force, at the request of a neighbouring nation shall be deployed to provide or protect the delivery humanitarian aid to that nation in the event of a declared emergency resulting from a natural disaster.

DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE

Defence force personnel and equipment shall be deployed to assist in the event of a Commonwealth declared national emergency resulting from a natural disaster, subject to the request by the affected State of Territory government.

ALLIANCES

Since foundation, Australia has depended on foreign alliances its defence, initially with Great Britain and later with the United States. While the ANZUS Treaty, signed in 1951 has not been formally abrogated, with New Zealand's 'nuclear ban' it has effectively been a bilateral agreement between Australia and the United States since 1986.

With the expansion of the Chinese military, new defence and security agreements have been entered into:

- a. AUKUS - a trilateral security pact between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, for the Indo-Pacific region and**
- b. QDS - Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, a strategic security dialogue between the United States, India, Japan and Australia that is maintained by talks between member countries.**

While alliances are an essential part of the defence mix, they in no way negate the Commonwealth Government's responsibility to keep the Australia and its people safe from foreign threats. Like most Western Nations, Australia maintains a small permanent, fulltime professional military with a minimal weapons inventory, that can neither be expanded or equipped rapidly. This contrary to it Constitutional obligations and needs to be promptly remedied.

DEFENCE COOPERATION AGREEMENTS

Australia needs to actively seek out other free and democratic nations, particularly in southern hemisphere and those with Pacific and Indian Ocean coastlines and where possible enter into Defence Cooperation Agreements. With its massive, spatially populated land mass, airspace, coastline and marine areas, Australia is well positioned to provide numerous joint military training and defence industry development facilities.

NUCLEAR DETERRENTS

Hostile "Super Powers" or "Rouge States" with nuclear weapons, intercontinental delivery systems and the will to unleash them, can likely extract the surrender of a conventionally armed nation without that nation being able to fire a shot. While Australia is dependent on the nuclear deterrent of the United States guard against such a likelihood, whether they are prepared to escalate a conflict in response to a nuclear strike on Australia is an unknown.

The conversation with the Australian people in regards to the development, building, testing and deployment of nuclear missile deterrent must be had and a Defence White Paper needs to be prepared in the next term of government.

The promise or even the delivery of a nuclear deterrent does not mitigate the requirement to maintain the level of conventional forces, as evidence has shown there is a reluctance to escalate conflicts to nuclear warfare leading to prolonged conventional wars.

SELF-RELIANCE AND RESILIENCE

The impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic exposed major deficiencies in Australia's supply chain which have been further exacerbated by the energy crisis unfolding since late 2021. While large stockpiles of strategic and tactical of equipment, munitions and fuel can mitigate supply chain interruption, the nation must have a viable Defence Industry and the ability to rapidly expand the military personnel numbers in the event of a crisis. Self-reliance and resilience are essential requirement of this Defence Policy.

While it is essential that Australia maintains a permanent, fulltime professional military its defence force, it must also include a significant short-term element that provides personnel with both military and vocational training who can later seamlessly return to duty in the event of crisis.

PROCUREMENT

The Commonwealth Government at intervals engages in major defence procurement contracts for limited quantities of capital equipment that inevitably suffer massive cost overruns, delays and provision of not fit purpose equipment, requiring significant and costly modifications or premature obsolescence. Accordingly, the selection and contacting processes of capital equipment must be overhauled to halt this cycle of waste.

While procurement of advanced defence technologies is essential, it must not create extended periods of reduced military capacity. Maintaining, significant stockpiles and supply chains of current, proven technology equipment must not be compromised in the pursuit of the distant supply of unproven, advanced technologies.

The Regional Defence Policy shall:

- **Ensure the defence of Australia and its territories by ensuring:
 1. **The Defence Force has the capabilities to deter aggressors far from our shores**
 2. **The Defence Force capabilities will inflict such casualties that an aggressor will find the invasion of Australia unsustainable.****
- **provide for a 1% GDP increase in defence spending during each election term to achieve a permanent level of 5% of national GDP.**
- **maintain a standing, fulltime professional defence force of no less than 0.4% of the total Australian population**
- **provide for an additional annual recruitment of up to 5,000 personnel under the age of 21 years on a three-year term of engagement.**
- **Provide a 50% reduction of Higher Education Contribution Scheme fee for all defence personnel completing a three-year term of engagement.**
- **ensure all defence personnel acquire at least one civilian operator licence, trade certificate or professional qualification during their defence engagement.**
- **provide an allowance to enable all medically fit, honourably discharged defence personnel, to maintain their full military kit and attend a two-week training course each year for 10 years.**
- **provide an allowance to enable all medically fit honourably discharged defence personnel, to purchase and store an approved long gun and maintain their firing range skills for a period of 10 years.**

- **reintroduce a comprehensive 6year term, trade apprentice scheme, open to students who successfully complete Year 10 of the compulsory education system.**
- **re-establish, Army, Navy and Air Force civil construction units to provide vocational training and civilian qualifications for defence personnel, deliver infrastructure for remote defence facilities and provide infrastructure to our Pacific neighbours as part of our foreign aid program.**
- **ensure no loss of defence capability between the obsolescence of existing capital equipment and full introduction of replacement capital equipment.**
- **review defence contracting to ensure defence procurement maximizes capacity and capability and is not comprised by ideology or electoral expediency.**
- **commit to the expansion of Australian defence industries.**
- **commit to the Australian design, development, building and introduction into service of fleets of surveillance and attack drones for the Army, Navy and Air Force.**
- **commit to the Australian design, development, building and introduction into service of, operator controlled, lethal and non-lethal robots for the Army, Navy and Air Force.**