THE SIZE AND ORGANISATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY
IN THE NEAR FUTURE GIVEN THE
AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE
WHITE PAPER 2000

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the US Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

THE SHAPE OF THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY IN THE NEAR FUTURE GIVEN THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE WHITE PAPER 2000, by MAJ Sean T. Ryan, 78 pages.

Australian military intervention within the Asia Pacific region in recent years has highlighted the changing strategic environment within the region and the importance of the Australian military, particularly the army, in resolving these matters. The 2000 Defence White Paper attempted to define this strategic environment and define the role of the ADF. It did not specifically address the roles and organization of the army to support this defense plan. Therefore central to this research is determining what organization the Australian Army needs to support the Defence White Paper. The paper addressed the issue through three steps. The first was the evaluation of Australia's strategic environment, which specifically reviewed the strategic outlook in the Asia Pacific region. Then it determined the likely roles the Australian Army would be assigned to support national objectives including what forces are needed. Finally the paper addressed the affordability of this organization in broad terms over the next ten years. The research recommended the Australian Army force grow to a full regular division with supporting troops and a more flexible army reserve force, develop a larger training force that can handle internal and external tasks, and maintenance of the existing sustaining force.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The International Force East Timor (INTERFET) operation and the Defence

White Paper 2000 are landmark events in Australia's national security strategy. These

events have forced the Australian government and the Department of Defence to review

how it intends to protect Australia and its interests. A central component of this review is

the role and tasks the Australian Army will play in protecting Australia and its interests.

The INTERFET operation is an important event because it is the first time

Australia has operated almost unilaterally within the Asia Pacific region. In the broadest

sense the operation highlighted how essential Australia's army is in providing security to

Australia and supporting stability within the Asia Pacific region. The operation also

demonstrated the value of maintaining a highly trained and responsive regular army to

protect national sovereignty and contribute to regional stability. A negative aspect of the

operation was the lack of depth in the army to potentially maintain a commitment like

INTERFET. This was highlighted by the absence of a strategically viable rotation plan

prior to the army's deployment. It was this fact that nearly contributed to Australia's

culmination during the operation. Thankfully the success of the operation and

international cooperation avoided this eventuality. This fact does pose the question is the

Australian Army organized to support commitments like INTERFET.

In response to this fact the Australian government commissioned a study of

Australia's national security strategy. This was the first defense review since 1994. The

study was a consultative process, which sought input from the defense community,

parliament, and the public. The study resulted in the Defence White Paper 2000

(Defence 2000). Defence 2000 defines Australia's national security strategy. It is a strategy that is expected to last until 2010.

Defence 2000 broadly covers all aspects of Australia's national security strategy including the current strategic environment, the capability requirements of the Australian Defence Force (ADF), and the industrial support structure needed to support the strategy. It serves to outline Australia's security issues and specify the nation's national interests. Interests that are defined as the " . . . general and continuing ends for which a state acts" *(Headquarters Australian Defence Force 1994, N-1).* However this will be further defined as those factors and conditions external to Australia's geographic boundaries that have a direct impact on the economic and security situation of Australia. Australia's national interests are to defend Australia and its direct approaches, foster the security of the Immediate Neighborhood, promote stability and cooperation in Southeast Asia, support strategic stability in the Asia Pacific region, and support global security. This final interest will not be covered in this study.

To support Defence 2000 the ADF has the three services that must combine to make the ADF joint warfighting team. An important component of this team is the Australian Army. The army is the land component of the joint warfighting team. Its mission is to " . . . provide a potent, versatile, and modern army to promote the security of Australia and to protect its people and interests" *(Combined Arms Doctrine and Training Centre 1998, 1-1).* It is expected to complete this mission across the full spectrum of conflict. The spectrum of conflict being defined as the " . . . range of potential conflicts that may occur between the extremes of peace and total war" *(Combined Arms Doctrine and Training Centre 1998, 2-2).* In the current strategic

environment the possibility of total war occurring in the next ten years is considered extremely remote, and therefore being organized for this type of conflict is considered unnecessary.

To achieve this mission the current regular army is organized into three functional components. Those components are Land Command, Training Command, and Support Command. Land Command holds all the combat forces in the army. Training Command is responsible for individual training and doctrine development. Finally Support Command provides all the base level logistics to the army. These last two commands will not be discussed further because their size and organization is dependent on Land Command. Land Command is divided into three broad functional groups and has a strength of approximately 13,000 regular army personnel. The three functional groups are the First Division, Second Division, and Land Command units.

First Division is an integrated division with regular and army reserve units. The regular units are a light, amphibious brigade and a mechanized brigade, along with two aviation battalions and a signal battalion. The remainder of the division is made up of an integrated brigade of regular and army reserve personnel. The division's regular army strength is approximately 9,000 personnel. It is this division that provides the core of Australia's highly trained and deployable forces.

Second Division is an army reserve division and provides the base for mobilization. This division's regular army strength is approximately 1,000 personnel. It will not be discussed further in this study.

Force troops have a wide variety of special skills in a range of regular and army reserve units. The regular units include two force logistic battalions, one construction

engineer battalion, two signal battalions, an air defense battalion, and two medical battalions. The strength of force troops is approximately 3,000 personnel.

It was this organization that the Australian Army had for INTERFET and that nearly proved to be inadequate. It is therefore important that the army considers and includes such requirements in its organization. This issue will be covered in this study. Additionally the broad nature of Defence 2000 means that the specific requirements of each service are not defined. A definition of these requirements is essential to the effective organization of the army. It is these specific requirements that this study will identify and address. The result will be the defining of the regular army organization required to meet these requirements.

Thesis Aim

The aim of this study is to determine the size and organization of the Australian Army in the near future given Defence 2000.

To support this aim the study examines and defines Australia's strategic environment to identify causes and effects that will impact of the mission of the Australian Army. Additionally the study examines the strategic missions assigned to the ADF and determines the roles and tasks of the army. The strategic environment, and these roles and tasks will form the basis for the organization of the regular army's combat force.

Strategic Environment

Essential to determining the organization of the regular army is examining the strategic environment within which the army will function. In geographic terms the strategic environment is defined as the Asia Pacific region and focuses on the nations in

and along the western shore of the Pacific Ocean. This region is also Australia's strategic area of interest. For this study an area of interest is defined as, " . . . the area of concern to the commander, including the area of influence, areas adjacent thereto, and extending into the threat territory to the objectives of current or planned operations. This area also includes areas occupied by real and potential threat forces that could jeopardise the accomplishment of the army's mission" *(Headquarters Australian Defence Force 1994, A-18).* For the purposes of this study the area of interest is defined geographically and does not include nations in Australia's area of influence. The area of interest specifically focuses on Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific areas within the region. The Southeast Asia area includes all the nations of the Malaysian Peninsula, including Thailand, former Indo-China, the Philippines and, most importantly, the Indonesian archipelago. The Southwest Pacific area includes all the Melanesian and Polynesian nations of the South Pacific, including Fiji, Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea.

Russia, China, India, Japan, and the United States are likely to be the major regional powers in the Asia Pacific region. These countries are important because of their ability to influence events throughout the whole region. However, it is unlikely that these nations will directly affect Australia's security situation. Their impact on Australia's security will be indirect and occur through their support of state and non-state entities within Australia's geographic area of interest. In the event of their direct engagement within the area of interest, Australia will naturally align itself with the United States' perspective. The impact and relationship of Australia with these nations will not be discussed, due to the indirect nature of the interaction with Australia.

By examining the strategic environment the study will ascertain where there are likely to be points of tension and instability that will require Australian military involvement in the next ten years. It identifies the nature and causes of this tension and instability and how this tension and instability will affect Australia and its national interests. Through this process a series of likely threats will be identified. These threats will form the basis of who, what, and where the Australian Army is likely to be deployed against in the near future. The answer to these questions will determine what organization the regular army will need over the next ten years to support the defense of Australia and its national interests.

<div align="center">Military Factors</div>

A factor not included in the study but important to note is the strategic and operational leadership role the ADF and, more importantly, the army is likely to play in military operations in the region. In East Timor the ADF assumed the role of strategic and operational leader and was responsible for planning and executing this mission. It executed this responsibility through the use of Headquarters First Division as a deployable joint force headquarters. This assignment of this leadership responsibility will carry with it the international expectations of the major regional powers, which are Russia, China, Japan, and the United States. Further it will reinforce Australia's traditional relationships and responsibilities for the Southwest Pacific and aim to foster the sometimes cold relationships with Southeast Asian nations.

It also highlighted the need for Australia to provide the preponderance of forces when it accepts this type of leadership role. Central to achieving this is a regular rapidly deployable army capable of a wide variety operations. This fact will be an important

consideration for the ADF before is assumes a strategic leadership role for an operation in the region. As this is an ADF consideration it is not addressed in this thesis.

It is also important to note the role the army will play in the ADF. The army represents the land component of the ADF joint warfighting team. The army, therefore, will not conduct operations independently and will be provided enabling capabilities from the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). Recent operational experience has also highlighted the need for the Australian Army to provide enabling capabilities to these other services, including ground based air defense and port handling services. These capabilities will be ongoing requirements for the army and will need to be included in the organization of the army.

An important factor not specified in Defence 2000 is the need for the ADF to be reactive to potential regional tension and instability. This will have a significant impact on the mobility and portability of the ADF, and the army specifically. This study kept this factor in mind when determining the organization of the regular army.

One factor not covered in this study is the role of the army reserve in supporting the national strategy. The army reserve fulfils a vital role in supporting and reinforcing the regular army. However, the lack of national legislation on the activation of the army reserve during operations other than war and the low level of readiness of many army reserve units it is highly unlikely that they can effectively contribute to the challenges outlined in Defence 2000. It is for this reason they were not included in this study.

Financial Factors

The organization of the regular army identified in this study must be affordable. This has been a challenge for the ADF in the past and promises to be a challenge in the

future. This study does not address the affordability of the proposed regular army organization but merely identify the economic environment within which the proposed organization must function.

The economic environment and defense budget must achieve two goals. The first is to maintain the Australian Army at the appropriate manning and training levels to meet the immediate threats of the next ten years. The other goal is to modernize and transform the Australian Army to meet the emerging threats past the next ten years. The satisfying of these goals will have to occur in a competitive, financially constrained economic environment.

This economic environment is divided into two areas. The first is the external effects of the economy on the Australian government budget. The ADF has always competed with other government departments for federal funding. Many factors affect federal funding but the most significant factor is the level of social welfare that needs to be provided by the government. The study highlights in broad terms the effect of key economic indicators that affect the government's budget and the effect the government budget has on the ADF budget.

The second area is the internal effect of service demands on the ADF budget. The services have continually competed against each other for available ADF funding. The challenges of meeting current threats and modernizing for future threats constantly causes friction among the services. This study broadly reviews ADF budgeting over the past five years and suggest what trends may occur in army budgets over the next ten years.

This identifies the economic framework within which the regular army organization will be funded in the future. It will not be a comprehensive study but will establish a base for further study.

<u>Outcome</u>

The outcome of the study will be a model for the regular combat force of the Australian Army for the next ten years. It will be adjusted to meet current and emerging threats. Most importantly the model will be an affordable one given the current financial trends and future funding expectations. The model will include the capability to function as a strategic and operational leader in the region. It will emphasize the importance of operating in a joint team and note the enabling capabilities the army must provide to the ADF. The end state will be an army of the right size and structure to fight Australia's future battles.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 2 identifies the key texts associated with this study. The texts are divided into three broad areas. The first area is national strategy. The review covers the three major national strategy documents from the last ten years. It identifies the trends and shifts in national strategy. The trends and shifts are compared against the most recent national strategy. The second area is ADF doctrine. The two specific documents discussed represent the joint and army perspective of what missions the army must complete. The study uses these perspectives to determine and prioritize the army's missions. The final area reviewed is the current studies of this topic. Many of these current studies have been commissioned by the army but represent independent thought on where the army is headed. The issues they raise will be viewed in terms of the strategic environment and the expectations of the army.

This review highlights the current strategic orientation of the army and what is currently perceived as requirements of the army. It forms the basis for this study.

National Strategy

The national strategy documents produced over the past ten years are *Defending Australia: Defence White Paper 1994*, *Australian Strategic Policy 1997*, and *Defence 2000 Our Future Defence Force*. Each of these publications describes Australia's strategic environment, the requirements of the army, and the fiscal situation within which Australian defense must function. These documents are significant to this study because together they outline the trends defense has taken over the past ten years and what direction it is likely to take over the next ten years.

All the strategies identify the Asia–Pacific region as Australia's prime focus for defense. All the strategies acknowledge the influence China, India, Russia, and the United States have on the region. For defense planning purposes the focus is further narrowed to Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific region. This area is defined as Australia's area of direct interest. Much of this focus is directly related to Australia's continuing economic interest in the region. All the strategies emphasize the direct relationship between Australia's economic interests and defense requirements. Indonesia remains a constant in Australia's strategy and is the most important component in defense planning.

The significant shifts in the environment emerge in the economic and political trends in the region. *Defending Australia* describes the region as politically and economically stable. *Defence 2000* raises concerns over the changing nature of politics in the region and the instability this change will bring. It further suggests this will be the norm rather than an anomaly. *Defending Australia* and *Australia's Strategic Policy 1997* outlined a perceived shift in the development of naval and air power within the region as nations establish effective control over internal tension. *Defence 2000* suggests that naval and air power developments will remain constrained while civil unrest and political turmoil continue to exist in the region.

The underlying mission of the ADF in all the strategies remains the defense of Australia and its interests. This form of defense was referred to as a defense in depth and had the aim of defeating a hostile force in the sea-air gap between Australia and the Asia Pacific region. The strategies further define the method for the defense as the protection

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of Australia' sea-air gap in the north. This strategy places great importance on maintaining the RAN and the RAAF as the leads in this mission.

The various strategies begin to change when considering the role and size of the army. In *Defending Australia* and *Australia's Strategic Policy* the army remains a response force to defeat hostile land forces on Australian territory (*Australia's Strategic Policy 1997*, 64). In both these strategies there were four military priorities and the land force was priority four for capability enhancement and was to reduce the standing land force.   This was because it was assessed that the nation would have a long time to prepare for land combat. The emphasis for the army was on developing surveillance capabilities and highly mobile responsive land task forces with tactical road and rotary wing mobility. *Defence 2000* shares the same mission with other strategies but is focused on defeating hostile forces with all three services before those forces reach Australian shores. It places the army on equal priority with the other services and emphasizes the requirement for the army to be conduct expeditionary operations. The new policy scraps the concept of long lead-time for most operations and recommends the army be better equipped and manned to respond sooner. These fundamental shifts require the army to be flexible and prepared for offshore regional contingencies.

<div align="center">Doctrine</div>

Another significant source of information on the requirements for the size and structure of the Australian Army is Australian doctrine. Specific documents of relevance to this study are *Australian Defence Force Publication 1-Doctrine* and *The Land Warfare Doctrine 1-Fundamentals of Land Warfare*.

Australian Defence Force Publication 1–Doctrine is the ADF's most important doctrinal document. It sits at the head of Australia's doctrinal framework and provides structural guidelines to service doctrine. It emphasizes the importance of joint warfighting for the ADF in executing the national security strategy. The publication was last published in 1993 and is, therefore, dated. *Australian Defence Force Publication1-Doctrine* represents valuable background information on what the expectations of the army are.

This publication describes the operational roles and functions of the ADF. These roles and functions are divided among the service and reveal the seams and overlaps between the duties of the army and the other services. It is these seams and overlaps that are relevant to this study.

It discusses broadly the ADF concept of operations. This concept of operations places emphasis on the need to be self-reliant for operations in the defense of Australia. This "assumes that, for the defense of Australia against contingencies credible in the shorter term, the ADF would act essentially alone in direct combat applications" *(Headquarters Australian Defence Force 1993, 1).* This concept is supported by the importance Australia places on treaties and agreements to maintain the defense of Australia and its interests, particularly trade. Notable treaties and agreements are the Australia, New Zealand, and United States (ANZUS) Treaty and the Five Power Defence Agreement (FPDA). These are specifically discussed in the context of the strategic environment. This environment is defined as the application of national defense factors, that is, geography, population, trade, and infrastructure, within a defined geographic area. All this is funneled to meet the nation's most important national defense responsibilities.

The first is the defense of territorial Australia. The second is the protection of Australia's interests, mainly trade.

This is an important piece of literature as it provides an insight into defense planning processes and the broad concept for how the army will be employed. The roles and functions of the army will further assist in answering issues regarding size and structure. The discussion on the strategic environment further confirms defense planners' perspectives but does not consider the full expanse of the operating environment. This publication contributes in a broad manner to army specific doctrine, which is discussed next.

Land Warfare Doctrine 1-Fundamentals of Land Warfare (LWD1) is the Australian Army's cornerstone doctrine document. It is the Australian Army's equivalent of the United States Army *Field Manual 3-0*, *Operations*. This publication links Australia's national strategy and ADF doctrine with the army's application of doctrine to tactics, techniques, and procedures. This publication was issued to the army before the current national strategy but is considered current and relevant by the current Australian Chief of Army. It is an authoritative document and examines philosophical requirements on raising, training, and sustaining the army in the near future.

The doctrine discusses the army's mission and tasks. It explains the nature of war and its enduring features, which are directly linked to the army's mission. These features are also described in the context of the modern battlefield. The document highlights the principles of war as perceived by Australians. These principles are selection and maintenance of the aim, co-operation, concentration of force, economy, security, offensive, surprise, flexibility, sustainment, and morale. Thus, *Land Warfare Doctrine 1-*

Fundamentals of Land Warfare establishes a theoretical framework within which the army is envisioned to fight.

The document then describes the strategic environment within which the army must function. The strategic environment is detailed in the doctrine; in geographical terms it specifies the Asia Pacific region as Australia's area of interest. This description is very broad. The region is further refined into three specific areas. The first is Southeast Asia. The second is Southwest Pacific. The final region, considered to be the most significant of the three, is the Immediate Neighborhood, which includes Indonesia, East Timor, and Papua New Guinea. The environment is also defined in geographical terms and also in political, social, and economic terms. This is considered important because the doctrine suggests threats to Australia are likely to be ethnic, religious, ideological, or criminal in nature. Thus, by defining the strategic environment the doctrine establishes the generic capabilities the army currently needs to raise and maintain.

The doctrine then establishes a framework within which the army should be constructed. It describes two specific types of operations the army must be able to complete. They are military operations in the littoral environment (MOLE) and protective/security operations on Australian territory. To support these operations the army must be expeditionary in nature and capable of conducting a forward defense.

The framework described in the literature divides the army tasks into five tactical functions and eight battlespace operating systems. The tactical functions are detect, inform, respond, protect, and sustain, while the eight battlespace operating systems are maneuver; fire support; mobility and survivability; air defense; information operations;

command and control; reconnaissance, surveillance and intelligence; and combat service support. The doctrine stresses the importance of maintaining a knowledge edge and remaining adaptive in order to "fight smart" *(Combined Arms Doctrine and Training Centre 1998, 6-2)*. Fighting smart is defined as the clever applications of fighting power though tactical maneuver and battle cunning. *(Combined Arms Doctrine and Training Centre 1998, 6-3)* Structurally the doctrine states the army should have a small regular force that is portable and flexible that is supported by a larger army reserve force.

LWD1 details the army's mission and the way it intends to fight to achieve this mission. It provides a broad guide to what the strategic environment is and raises the importance of the Indonesian archipelago to Australia's defense. The publication goes on to provide some innovative guidelines for the structure of the army. These guidelines are expressed in terms of tactical functions, battlespace operating systems, and professional observations. The professional observations are those expressed by the Chief of Army and provide interesting discussion points for the size and structure of Australia's Army. *Land Warfare Doctrine 1-Fundamentals of Land Warfare* represents one of the key studies on the role and tasks of the Australian Army.

Current Studies

The Land Warfare Studies Centre has produced a number of research papers that have concentrated on the Australian Army's role in the current strategic environment. The papers have discussed the validity of Australia's recent strategies and the role the Australian Army has in those strategies. The Land Warfare Studies Centre has not published any research into the affordability of the Australian Army or ADF. It is important to note that the Land Warfare Studies Centre is an army unit under the direct

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command of the Chief of Army and, therefore, its papers are army-centric. This is highlighted in the Centre's mandate, which is to act as " . . . the Army's principal conceptual research institution 'think tank'. The LWSC supports the Chief of Army, Army Headquarters and the army as a whole through a range of research, publication, conference and Visiting Fellow programs" *(Land Warfare Studies Centre 2002, 1).* As the papers are army-centric they tend to emphasize the importance of the army above the other services, which may affect the validity of the papers' conclusions.

At the core of these papers is the effect of strategic environment on the ADF and more importantly the army. They agree that the environment will be complex. Military operations will be conducted in and around occupied urban environments. Ethnic and religious divisions will exist and create additional friction in the operating environment. Additionally military operations will most likely be undertaken on a non- linear battlefield, where the enemy is difficult to identify. Australia is likely to have many threats with this strategic environment. These threats are going to be oriented toward Australia's national interests rather than against Australian sovereignty. The threats will take many forms. Some threats will be from other states, but the majority is likely to be non-state groups. These non-state groups could be either state-sponsored or self-funded. The greatest threat is perceived to be state-sponsored military operations, which are likely to proliferate throughout the Southeast Asia and Southwest Pacific regions. These studies agree on the threats and nature of those threats in the environment.

All the papers examine Australia's military strategy. Many highlight the maritime nature of Australia's strategy, which is based on the defense of Australia's sea-air gap, that is, the maritime and air approaches to Australia from the Indonesian archipelago and

Papua New Guinea. Michael Evans, the author of *"The Role of the Australian Army in a Maritime Concept of Strategy,"* suggests that the concept is sound but the army's role in this concept is far too restrictive. He goes on to suggest that there has been a rise in the number of expeditionary operations conducted in the littoral environment over the past ten years and that Australia should be capable of expeditionary operations to protect a wide range of national interests. The discussion investigates in depth the validity of a continental defense of Australia. Many of the papers considered that Australian defense planners are too focused on a continental defense of Australia and have completely disregarded the concept of forward defense. Forward defense is described as the defense of Australia beyond Australian shores. In *"The Implications of the United States Army's Army-After-Next Concepts for the Australian Army,"* Lieutenant Colonel Greg de Somer suggests that the core of Australia's strategy is that the ADF needs to be " . . . joint, postured for warfighting in a multi-national alliance" *(de Somer 1999, 22)*. This idea is shared among the other authors at the Land Warfare Studies Centre.

The most significant point of contention in past works is whether the army's role in the military strategy is one of forward defense or continental defense. Over the past ten years strategic planners have clearly specified the ADF's mission as " defend Australia and its interests" *(Australian Government 2000, 30)*. Authors such as Alan Ryan and Michael Evans have argued that the army's role in this mission should be focused on national interests and, therefore, a forward defense. Defense planners have suggested that the army's part in this mission is continental defense. Alan Ryan, in *'Primary Responsibilities and Primary Risks' Australian Defence Force Participation in the International Force East Timor'*, highlights that defense planners have got it wrong and

that the army's role is most definitely forward defense in protection of national interests. This is likely to be a continuing issue in this paper. Another trend that emerged from these studies is the increase in non-military tasks for the army. The army's tasks now appear to include bush fire fighting and non-combat search and rescue. These additional tasks are likely to factor into the army's future mission and concept of operations.

These papers represent significant studies in the role and tasks envisioned for the army. The authors attempt to highlight disconnects between defense planning and the reality of the strategic environment. They agree with current strategic estimates that the contemporary operating environment is complex and filled with an unusual array of players. They differ markedly from defense planners on the role the army should play in the military strategy. Defense planners envision the bulk of the army being oriented on continental defense while the Land Warfare Studies Centre authors suggest this is not robust enough and forward defense is more appropriate. To complicate the army's mission further there is common agreement that the army must be arrayed to meet all contingencies, including non-military. In conclusion, these studies address many issues regarding the mission and tasks the Australian Army is likely to face in the future and what the strategic environment is likely to be.

<u>Trends in the Literature</u>

There is a range of common themes in the literature. The first is the limited change in national security strategies over the past ten years. The focus continues to be on defending Australia and its interests. The interests remain ill-defined and open to interpretation. This gives the government the greatest flexibility in using the military. Central to the national security strategy is the maritime strategy, which focuses on

Australia's sea-air gap. The ADF's doctrine goes on to support this strategy with a concept of operations that employs the army in continental defense, a concept that is argued by prominent military strategists to be flawed. It is also argued that the army will be unable to protect national interests if it is structured for continental defense.

The literature does not cover the affordability of the army. The national strategies outline funding proposals but do not examine the realities of block obsolesce and the changing nature of the environment. This study intends to cover the affordability of the army over the next ten years.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research covered two specific topics and touched on the economic climate

any change would occur within. The topics are the strategic environment and the likely

roles and tasks of the Australian Army within the environment. The research sequentially

investigated these issues because the outcomes of each topic will directly impact on the

subjects of the next. Central to the research was determining the size and organization of

the regular army's combat force to meet the demands of Defence 2000. The outcome of

each of these areas of research was compiled in the conclusion with the areas for further

research.

Strategic Environment

Central to the study was defining the strategic environment within which the

Australian Army is likely to undertake operations. This was important because it

determined what were the potential roles and tasks of the army and the type of

capabilities and force structure required to achieve those assigned roles and tasks. This

was achieved through the examination of the four components of Australia's area of

interest: Southeast Asia, Southwest Pacific, Immediate Neighborhood, and continental

Australia.

The study reviewed the political and economic conditions of four components of

Australia's area of interest. It identified and described the likely friction points in each

area. The analysis will identifies the major political movements and economic issues in

the specific to each region. Directly connected to these topics were descriptions of state

and non-state factors affecting the region. The review of the political and economic

environment concluded by stating the major political tensions in the region and how those tensions relate to the roles and tasks of the army.

The study of the environment was completed by reviewing the ethnic and religious issues in each area. These issues were important in identifying types of problems the army would encounter when operating in the region. The outcome of this study was the identification of potential tension points and provided focus for the organizing of the regular army.

<u>Roles and tasks for the Army</u>

After defining the strategic environment the study outlined the roles and tasks for the army. These roles and tasks further refined the specific capabilities and force structure requirements for the army. This analysis was at be the core of the study and established what organization of the army should have. This was achieved by specifying the roles and tasks of the army in the environment as part of the joint warfighting team. Army roles emerged directly from the analysis of the strategic environment and the national security strategy. Conflicts between the reality of the strategic environment and the national security strategy were noted. From the role emerged the specific tasks for the army. These tasks were analyzed and divided into capabilities. Once the army had been reduced to a series of essential capabilities the research collated these capabilities into doctrinal force organization. The outcome of this collation was the organization of the regular army to meet operational demands. The study did not highlight the enabling and sustaining force requirements.

Affordability of the Australian Army

After determining the most suitable size and structure of the army the thesis reviewed the potential financial environment for the ADF and regular army. This review examined the overall economy and defense budgets over the past five to ten years to determine a viable level of spending to support the proposed army.

The study examines the Australian economy's performance over the past ten years. This is a general overview of the nation's economic performance. After describing the general economic environment the study highlights specific economic trends from the past ten years. Economic trends are assessed in terms of the gross effect on major economic indicators of the nation. The economic indicators used are the Australian rate of unemployment and the rate of inflation. Unemployment figures are used to identify welfare spending trends of the government. Inflation rates highlight the relative increases or decreases in the value of the national budget. This information is then extrapolated to project future economic trends over the next ten years, which determines whether defense spending can expand or must contract.

After outlining of the national economic environment the studies Department of Defence's financial situation. A general overview of the defense budget is examined to highlight the traditional spending priorities within the Department. The specific spending trends among the services were reviewed. Initially this is in percentage terms of the defense budget by service, and then there is a review of spending by service with respect to manpower and capability development. A difference in manpower among the services highlights obvious spending differences. To overcome the biases the spending on manpower is referred to in terms of spending per capita. This overcomes any slew

toward the army and makes the figures more reflective of the spending on military manpower. A limitation of the research was the expensive nature of RAN and RAAF projects due to their highly technological nature. This is an accepted limitation.

Having established the current base line of spending the study projected future defense spending and suggested how the force can be afforded. The affordability analysis will conclude with the proposed funding of the suggested regular army organization. These can be the basis for further research.

<u>Conclusion</u>

The conclusion collates the outcomes of the study. The assessment recommends a regular army organization to meet the ADF roles and tasks assigned to the army within the context of the strategic environment. Areas of further research will be highlighted, including the role of army reserve in the strategy, and any new capability requirements resulting from the study. The outcome of the study is a recommended organization for the regular Australian Army combat force.

CHAPTER 4

AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

Global Factors

Internationally three global trends have arisen to shape Australia's security

environment. Therefore, when considering Australia's strategic environment it is

important to understand the impact of globalization on the Asia Pacific region, the

primacy of the United States in the post Cold War world, and the intervention of the

United Nations on security matters.

Globalization serves to demonstrate that Australia cannot function within a

vacuum. Trends in international trade and commerce demonstrate the interdependence of

nations and serves to highlight the effects of globalization. Australia's dependence on

exports highlights the significance of globalization on the nation's national interests. The

Defence 2000 describes the effects of globalization as " . . . good for security because it

strengthens the stake that governments and people have in the smooth working of the

international system" *(Australian Government 2000, 15).* The implication of

globalization for the Australian Army is that the army will need to be capable of

protecting Australia's interests, particularly international trade and commerce. As

Australia is likely to share some of these interests with its regional neighbors, it is

important that the army be flexible and inter-operable with the nations of the Asia Pacific

region.

The next most significant global factor shaping Australia's strategic environment

is the primacy of the United States. US economic and diplomatic strength will invariably

shape the nature of trade, finance, and inter-state relationships within the Asia Pacific

region. This will have a direct effect on Australia's national interests within the region. Additionally, Australia shares a unique diplomatic, economic, cultural, and security relationship with the US, a relationship that can be used for leverage within the region. The current US president and the US secretary of state reinforced this relationship. In fact, US Secretary of State Colin Powell described the relationship as " . . . Australia was one of America's 'very, very best friends in the world' partly because the United States has regularly drawn on Australian support over the years" *(CNN 2001).* Given US primacy both globally and within the Asia Pacific region, it is likely that any military security issues will involve the US. As this is the case, the ADF will need to be well integrated with US forces. Additionally the army must be interoperable with the US Army and the US Marine Corps. This will be an important factor in the structural development of the Australian Army.

The last trend internationally affecting Australia is the role and intervention of the United Nations (UN) in international security matters. Regionally this global organization has facilitated the promotion of regional security. This role is clearly defined in the UN Charter, which states that the function of the UN Security Council is " . . . to maintain international peace and security in accordance with the principles and purposes of the UN" *(UN 2001).* To fulfil this role the UN has been supporting and legitimizing regional security efforts, to include Australian intervention in East Timor in September 1999 and New Zealand intervention in Bougainville in December 1997. This trend is likely to continue to impact on Australian military participation in regional and international missions. For the army the impact is being prepared to fully support UN missions with mission trained troops available for rapid deployment.

Asia Pacific Region

The Asia Pacific region is set to be one of the most dynamic regions in the world over the next few decades. Issues of population growth, economic development, and energy consumption represent some of the most pressing demands in the region. "The most critical issue for the security of the entire region is the nature of the relationship between the region's major powers – China, Japan, India, Russia and the US" *(*Australian Government *2000, 17).* The interaction of these nations will establish the framework within which the region will function, and will have an indirect effect on Australia's national interests and security.

To further galvanize the relationship of these regional powers Asia Pacific forums will assist in bringing these nations together. The forum with the greatest power to achieve this is the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) forum. APEC was established in 1989 in response to the growing interdependence among Asia Pacific economies. Begun as an informal dialogue group, APEC has since become the primary regional vehicle for promoting open trade and practical economic co-operation *(APEC 2002).* All major regional powers and the less significant nations in the region use the forum to promote security through shared economic development. It is not a military security arrangement and it has limited proactive capacity to maintain security in the region. Its greatest asset is that it is a formal arrangement that brings the major regional powers together to support stabilizing economic policies. This will not prevent the regional major powers from having a tenuous relationship. Critical issues within this relationship that are likely to create friction are the future of nationalist Taiwan with regard to the People's Republic of China, continued tension on the Korean peninsula, and

economic development in the South China Sea. Australia's support will most likely be aligned with US policy and, therefore, maintenance of Australia's diplomatic and security ties with the US will be most important. Militarily, Australia will need to be ready to intervene through the Australia, New Zealand, US (ANZUS) Treaty, and this orientation further reinforces the need for interoperability between these two nations' Armies.

Southeast Asia

Closer to Australia, the flow of trade within Southeast Asia will be of prime importance. The security of Singapore, preservation of the Malacca Straits, and economic developments within the South China Sea will be significant security concerns to Australia. The most likely forum that will dominate these discussions is the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). ASEAN represents the most important and well integrated economic/ union in the region. "ASEAN continues to provide focus for the sense of shared interests and common goals which has been so important to Southeast Asia over recent decades" *(Australian Government 2000, 20)*. This has been achieved through a mutually agreed charter that promotes economic and social development within its member nations. This has stabilized the external interaction among the member states.

The absence of a security arrangement and the " . . . non-interference in the internal affairs of one another" *(ASEAN 2002).* clause has limited the value of this association in its ability to intervene in destabilizing security issues in the region. Australia has long recognized the value of ASEAN. In the 1993 Strategic Review the Department of Defence described ASEAN's success as a regional grouping over the last quarter of a century as "a major factor in Australia's security" *(Department of Defence*

1993, 11). Today this remains the case, but ASEAN's reluctance to intervene in regionally destabilizing internal tensions has caused non-ASEAN member states to intervene to stabilize and secure the environment. This was certainly the case in the Australian intervention in East Timor. Australia, as an observer in ASEAN, can and should be prepared to intervene in potentially regionally destabilizing issues, such as ethnic violence in Indonesia and political unrest in Cambodia. This will have an affect on the capabilities Australia's military must have to support such intervention. Aside from naval and RAAF mobility assets, the army must be portable enough to move on the other service modes of transport and be at a high level of preparedness in order to respond rapidly. This will support Australia's security by ensuring the region is secure.

Aside from the interstate regional agreements, the Southeast Asian region is plagued by non-state security concerns. These concerns include the expansion of piracy, the steady increase in smuggling of people, and the prevalence of nationalist separatist movements. The most pressing of these issues is the expansion of piracy in the Straits of Mallacca and in the South China Sea. This has impeded the flow of trade in the East Asian region, particularly the region's major transshipment hub in Singapore. Such are the concerns over this matter that Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mohammed Mahatir has suggested, " . . . an expansion to the traditional peace keeping operations in the region should include the safe guarding sea and air lanes from piracy" *(Taylor 2001, 94).* This issue manifests as a real problem for the continued and uninterrupted flow of trade to and from Australia. Any interference to Australian trade is a direct threat to the nation's national interest. In response to this threat Defence 2000 directs the ADF "will have a major part to play in coastal surveillance and enforcement activities" *(Australian*

Government. 2000, viii). Clearly the RAN will be the primary agent of executing this direction, but it will fall upon the army to support the RAN in this mission. This support is likely to include the provision of forces for opposed boardings, training of naval personnel for hostile boardings, and the provision of hostage recovery forces. These forces will need to maintain a high state of readiness and portability to support the RAN. It is most likely this task will fall upon the army's Special Forces.

Adding to the security problems associated with piracy is the prevalence of people smuggling in the South China Sea and Indonesian archipelagic waters. This is a well organized criminal operation that is directly aimed at inserting illegal immigrants into Australia. It is an operation that runs across the breadth of the region and interconnects the military and law enforcement forces of the region. Australia's primary concern over people smuggling is the inability of Australia to sustain these illegal immigrants as members of the community and control their entry into the country. Australia's small population and current economic difficulties prevent it from being able to house and support these immigrants effectively. To immediately allow them into the community without considering their welfare will only invite danger in terms of additional long term government financial support, which will draw funding away from other government spending, e.g., for defense, and place a greater burden on the tax paying public. These are options that are not acceptable to the government or the public.

Additionally the infiltration of these immigrants will demonstrate weaknesses in Australia's ability to protect her sovereignty. The ADF plays an important role in protecting Australia's borders and fundamental to that role is stopping this illegal influx of people into Australia. The army will play a supporting role in this defense mission.

This role will include coastal surveillance, hostile boardings, and detention center management. These tasks are not conventional army tasks, but will be important as over-stretched law enforcement forces struggle to counter this threat where the defense of the nation is at stake.

Finally there is the widespread expansion of nationalist separatist movements across the East Asian region. Some of these movements oppose corrupt non-democratic governments, as is the case in Myanmar, or they seek their independence from recognized democratic governments, as is the case in Aceh, Indonesia. These movements generally have a destabilizing effect on the region and promote amoral methods to determine resolution. This has been demonstrated time and time again in the region. An example of these amoral methods was the kidnapping and holding hostage of United States citizens Martin and Gracia Burnham, by the Philippine separatist group Abu Sayyaf.

The risks these movements represent are the breaking up of existing stable countries, threat to Australian citizens, and establishment of unsustainable nations. In the case of breaking up existing countries and forming new countries, separatist movements represent a new unknown government which could have policies that bring it into direct conflict with Australia and create additional governments Australia must deal with on regional security matters. This further complicates a region that is already complex. Additionally, these groups threaten the freedom of Australian citizens who travel and trade throughout the region. Threats to Australian citizens are direct threats against Australia and force Australia to respond diplomatically, but with force if necessary. Finally many separatist groups aim for nation status when they are ill equipped

administratively and economically to support their proposed population, thus creating

unsustainable nations. An example of this is the establishment of Ambon as a separate

state, which has little economically to offer and a limited administrative system without

Indonesian reinforcement. The implications for Australia are to simplify the national

links within the region by supporting existing well established governments, protecting

Australian citizens and opposing the creation of new unsustainable nations. Militarily

Australia will need to maintain strong defense links with established government forces,

including individual and collective training. Also a national recovery capability will be

required for the rescue of Australian citizens. Finally, the regular army must be large

enough to conduct peace enforcement and belligerent separation in cases where new

nations are formed, as was the case in East Timor.

Southwest Pacific

The Southwest Pacific represents a difficult regional leadership challenge for

Australia. The region has steadily been declining in economic and political stability over

the past ten years. The region prospered in the post World War Two years due to

significant United States economic engagement, regional tourism, and an abundance of

natural resources. Now the United States has withdrawn from the region due to

technological and geo-political changes. The steady exhaustion of the region's natural

resources, such as fisheries and phosphorous, has caused the withdrawal of major

regional powers. The other significant powers to withdraw from the region are Russia

and Japan. This has left the region with tourism as the single viable economic resource.

All that remains from this withdrawal is a region with " . . . inherent problems of national

development . . . caused by an unsustainable relationship between population and

resources" *(Australian Government, 2000, 22).* These problems have resulted in deep

rooted structural problems surfacing. Problems such as the installation of tribalism as a

form of national government and inter-racial tension have deepened the political,

economic, and administrative abyss within the region and have led to widespread

lawlessness and violence.

This lawlessness and violence is divided into two broad categories. The first is

political violence, which is violence directed at the national political institutions that have

been democratically elected to administer the nation. This violence has taken the form of

coup d'etat or terrorist operations aimed at political parties or institutions. This was

clearly demonstrated in Fiji in 2000, when George Speight, a Fijian national and

renowned businessman, led an armed coup with elements of the Fijian Army Special

Forces against the predominantly Fijian Indian government. The coup resulted in

widespread anarchy and lawlessness across the Fijian islands. The coup divided the

nation and threatened to develop into an inter-racial civil war. This problem was solved

by absolving the representative government, acknowledging the demands of the coup

leader for a Fijian islander dominant national government, and encouraging the use of

tribal leaders to elect the national government. This situation is typical of the nature of

politics within the Southwest Pacific and poses a challenge diplomatically for Australia.

The other category of lawlessness and violence is ethnic violence. This is

potentially a greater risk to the stability and security of the Southwest Pacific. Ethnic

violence has been common in the region over the past twenty years. This has been

highlighted by the armed insurrection on Bougainville by native islanders against Papua

New Guinean government troops, and the ethnic fighting among natives of Guadacanal,

Isatabuans, and the Malaitan in the Solomon Islands. Most of the ethnic violence is deep

rooted and was caused by the departure of colonial powers and introduction of non-

indigenous labor during World War Two by the Allies. The most notably example of this

is the civil war being fought in the Solomon Islands between the native Isatabuan people

and the introduced Malaitan. This is typical of the ethnic violence in the region.

The dominance of political and ethnic violence in the Southwest Pacific poses a

major problem for Australia. This is because of Australia's longtime interest in this

region through economic ventures, such as tourism, and the geographical location of the

region between Australia and the United States. As a result, Australia views itself as the

self-proclaimed regional leader in the Southwest Pacific. It therefore sees resolving these

problems as its responsibility, a view that is opposed by many nations in the region as it

interferes with their independence. As a result, Australia constantly maintains a delicate

diplomatic and economic relationship with the area. The implications of this relationship

is the need for a suitably equipped and prepared military to respond to and support

economic and diplomatic affairs. The specific characteristic the military must have is the

ability to respond over significant distances, with a capability of maneuvering in the

archipelagic waters of the Pacific and sustain the engagement. Direct implications for the

army are the need for a portable active land force capable of evacuation, security, peace

enforcement, and combat operations, and a follow force that can sustain the engagement

indefinitely. These are significant challenges for the army that need to be included in any

force structure planning.

<u>Immediate Neighborhood</u>

Australia's Immediate Neighborhood consists of Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and East Timor. As Australia's immediate neighbors they hold a special significance for the security of Australia. They are of specific concern to Australia due to their close proximity and their current political, economic, and separatist problems. These are problems that are likely to continue for at least the next ten years.

Indonesia

Indonesia's size and economic potential make it the most important neighbor in Australia's strategic assessment. The 1999 political revolution in Indonesia was a landmark in Indonesian leadership. It marked the end of a corrupt, autocratic, military supported regime under Suharto and replaced it with a fledgling democratic government. This political turmoil helped to reveal the full extent of Indonesia's deep seated economic problems, which have stemmed from a poorly organized banking sector and official corruption. These problems have eroded the economic capabilities and status of the nation, a status and economy that Australia is keen to improve. To add to the problems, decades of government-implemented transmigration from Java to outlying regions have created violent ethnic tensions across the archipelago. These tensions have committed the Indonesian military to years of internal security operations.

On the global scene Indonesia represents an important link between Australia and the oil rich Islamic world because it has the world's largest Muslim population. All this has contributed to the growth of nationalist separatist movements throughout the one thousand island archipelago and resulted in the independence referendum in East Timor. This has also resulted in the erosion of the effective administration of the nation and

committed the military to major internal security operations. This situation is likely to continue with the Free Aceh Movement seeking independence, as did East Timor, the West Papuan rebels seeking autonomy for their province, inter-racial violence between Javanese and Borneo natives, and student led political protests in Jakarta. Australia's strategic assessment of Indonesia is that violence and unrest will continue while the nation continues to " . . . face large economic and structural challenges" *(Australian Government 2000, 20).*

Indonesia's economic challenges have already been listed and much has been done to commence solving this problem, but the structural problems are likely to be the more demanding challenge. Structural challenges to be solved include maintaining the archipelago as one nation under a central government, reforming the military by separating its administrative functions from its security roles, and by establishing a democratic form of government. These challenges are in the best interest of Indonesia and also directly serve the security of Australia, particularly the maintenance of Indonesia as a single nation. Australia will play a key role in this restructuring process through diplomatic, military, and economic methods while preserving Indonesia's independence. The likely military methods will be the development of close defense ties with Indonesia through training and national defense arrangements and the provision of forces to support external security concerns should they arise. At the same time, protection of Australian citizens and interests will be foremost in defense planners' thoughts. Army involvement in military engagement will be the provision of evacuation forces for Australian and other foreign nationals, and reinforcement of Indonesian forces during potential external

disputes. Australia faces a delicate situation in developing military capabilities where Indonesia is concerned.

<center>Papua New Guinea</center>

The other major country in Australia's immediate neighborhood is Papua New Guinea. This former Australian protectorate has faced significant social and political unrest since its independence in 1975. Much of this unrest can be attributed to the weakness in the political and administrative system established in the country by Australia. It is a nation that is still divided by tribalism. This has meant the tribes have continued to fight against each other, which has contributed to the general lawlessness across Papua New Guinea. A largely agrarian and subsistence based economy has been under significant financial pressure in recent years and has meant that the government has continually had to fight a large national debt. To counter this debt problem the government has reduced spending on defense and law enforcement. Hence the creation of the current problem.

This has been further exacerbated by unrest in the military over Australian investment and intervention into Papua New Guinean affairs. Military unrest has resulted in two coup d'etats and several localized army insurrections. The unrest has resulted in a significant change in Australian involvement in the country, as highlighted by the recent defense spending in Papua New Guinea. For example expenditure on defense co-operation " . . . has declined from a peak of $52 million in 1990-91 (coinciding with major infrastructure projects) to $10 million (2001-2002 estimate). Nevertheless this allocation of defense cooperation funds is the largest allocated to any single country, signifying the importance of Australia's defense relationship with Papua New Guinea"

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(Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2002). Along with defense interests Australia

has a significant number of mining interests as well as citizens residing in Papua New

Guinea. This leaves Australia with a mission of securing these assets in times of

significant unrest and protecting against incursions from this tropical nation. It is in

Papua New Guinea that Australia faces its largest military challenge. It is a challenge in

which the army is likely to be the dominant service. The challenge extends from the

prospect of a non-combatant evacuation operation through to a permanent occupation

force while Papua New Guinea establishes a sustainable political, economic, and

administrative system. It is a significant task that will take a take large amount of forces

to complete.

East Timor

The emergence of East Timor as a new state in the region will continue to change

the security arrangements in the immediate neighborhood. It will be a fledgling player in

a situation where it must cohabit with its former ruler, Indonesia, and its new-found

protector, Australia. It enters the security environment with a range of internal and

external security problems.

Internal problems for East Timor include establishing a functioning political, law

enforcement, and administrative system, and counter insurgency issues with pro-

Indonesian militias. External problems will include dealing with its direct neighbor and

former ruler, Indonesia, and developing a sustainable economy for its population. All

these problems will be difficult for East Timor to overcome itself. It will require

sponsorship and direct support from its self-proclaimed protector, Australia. This will be

an ongoing commitment for Australia involving diplomatic, economic, and military

involvement. Diplomatically and economically Australia will provide infrastructure development and support in international forums like Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation. Military intervention will be a continued border occupation force until a trained Timorese defense force is established. Australia will assist in the training of the East Timorese Defence Force, to include bilateral training exercises. This will place a greater emphasis on Australia's maintaining a balance of regular and army reserve forces to sustain such a long term engagement.

Australia

The final component of the strategic environment that must be considered is the role the Australian environment will play in national strategy. The current national environment is a stable one with a well developed democratic political system and a robust economy. Social ambivalence and multiculturalism contribute to a stable environment by limiting ethnic and racial violence to small confinable instantaneous events. In such a benign environment it is unlikely the military will have a task in internal security missions. The only exception to this is likely to be the employment of national security forces in anti-terrorist missions mainly because these missions are unpredictable and costly for the law enforcement agencies to maintain at a local level.

The most significant feature in Australia's security environment is its strategic geography. This is described as "the inter-relationship between geography and the application of military power in the international system" *(Combined Arms Doctrine and Training Centre 1998, 3-11).* The nature of this strategic geography, in particular the natural geography, affords a significant defensive advantage to Australia. It is a geography that is characterized by vast long and vulnerable maritime approaches in the

East, South, and West. The northern approaches from Southeast Asia and the Southwest

Pacific represent the most likely and dangerous approaches to Australia. Should an

adversary cross these approaches it will encounter the harsh northern regions of

Australia, regions that are limited in infrastructure and populations. The harshness of this

region also acts as a double edged sword for military operations. The lack of

infrastructure and support bases limits the ability of the ADF to repel an adversary

quickly. It is because of this factor that the army must look carefully at what capabilities

it will require. The geography will naturally force the army to look for a mobile force

that can move quickly to counter the adversary. Mobility will form the core of the force

and the mobility will be based on RAAF support, along with wheeled and rotary wing

tactical mobility. Directly linked to this is the reconnaissance and surveillance elements

that can improve response time and maintain effective situational awareness. Lastly the

regular army must have a major sustaining force that will provide it the flexibility to

move quickly over long ranges. It will be a challenging environment, but guarding the

nation's sovereignty is the prime mission of the ADF and army.

CHAPTER 5

AUSTRALIAN ARMY: MEETING THE DEMANDS OF THE STRATEGIC
ENVIRONMENT

Characteristics for the Army from the Strategic Environment

The current security situation in the Asia Pacific region creates many challenges

for the ADF, specifically the Australian Army. The growing trend of globalization and

US primacy in the region has significant implications on the characteristics of the army.

The main features of these developments are the need for the army to be flexible and

maintain suitable interoperability with regional peers as well as the US. In this case

flexibility means that the army must not be overly organized for specific conventional or

non conventional missions but rather retain a broad range of capabilities at high levels of

preparedness. Interoperability on the other hand must be a fundamental characteristic of

army doctrine and future capability development. Given the involvement of the US in

the region and the number of Asian nations using US procedures it is therefore sensible

that Australia orients its doctrine and capability development toward US procedures and

trends. This should maximize the interoperability of Australia with the region and the

US. These will be fundamental characteristics for the Australian Army.

The security situation in Southeast Asia presents additional challenges to the

current and future organization of the regular army. The growth of internal security

problems because of separatist movements creates the most significant issue for

Australia. While addressing this issue will be predominantly a political and diplomatic

activity, it is important that the army is well positioned to reinforce any initiatives

mounted by the Australian government. It is because of the primacy of diplomacy in

these matters that the army must be capable of responding quickly. This raises a further

important characteristic the army must have and that is portability. The implication of this is that the army must be relatively lightweight so that it can be moved rapidly on existing RAAF aircraft and RAN ships. In suggesting the force be lightweight it must still retain sufficient quantities of firepower, mobility, and protection to conduct a broad spectrum of missions.

Additional challenges for the army in the region are the growth of piracy and people smuggling. While these problems will mainly be tasked to the RAN it is important to remember that the ADF fights as a joint team and therefore the army will play an important role in supporting the RAN. The support is likely to take the form of mission specific tasks. Those tasks are likely to be the provision of hostage recovery forces, teams for opposed boarding operations and training, and coastal surveillance duties. The army has long overlooked these missions. It is important that the army support the RAN in this mission of protecting Australian waters and shipping.

The Southwest Pacific will continue for the foreseeable future be an area where there is an unsustainable relationship between population and resources. This will continue to fuel ethnic disharmony and political instability. The challenge Australia faces with this situation is the protection of national interests and citizens while encouraging stability. The region is a popular tourist destination for Australians and an economic haven for Australian multi-national companies. If there is continued political and ethnic instability these interests may need protection or citizens may require evacuation quickly during times of tension. As noted earlier the best way the army can achieve this is by remaining highly prepared for these types of operations and extremely portable.

The final external security issue that affects the organization of the army is the current domestic and international challenges of Australia's immediate neighborhood. Indonesia, East Timor, and Papua New Guinea have developed unique and lasting security problems. For Indonesia the ethnic divisions of a thousand island archipelago and economic structural problems create an environment for separatism. This is not in Indonesia's or Australia's best interests and therefore supporting and reinforcing Indonesian operations will be an important part of securing the neighborhood. For the army this mean it must continue to be engaged with the Indonesian Army on day-to-day basis through training and liaison. It is important that these issues are built into the army.

For East Timor the issue is a little simpler. Australia secured East Timor's independence from pro-Indonesia militias and therefore has an investment in the success of East Timor. To reinforce this success Australian needs to ensure that East Timor has a military capable of maintaining its own security in a professional and disciplined manner. Australia must maintain engagement with East Timor by providing security forces until the East Timor military is ready to take over, training the East Timor military, and participating in bi-lateral training to promote security.

Finally Papua New Guinea is Australia's most significant challenge. It is a nation on the verge of collapse because of political and economic mismanagement. Tribal rivalry and military dissent wrack Papua New Guinea. If Papua New Guinea continues along its current path it will financially collapse and become a haven of tribal wars. Australia's engagement plan will place significant emphasis on the Australian Army's ability to secure Australia's interest and potentially enforce a military occupation of this nation. While not a preferred option it is a real possibility. Should this be the case the

army must be able to quickly deploy sufficient force to establish localized security and then be capable of expanding. This will require integration between the regular army and the army reserve components. This will be the most important challenge for the army over the next ten years.

<div align="center">Australian Military Strategy</div>

All these characteristics, tasks, and essential capabilities of the army, when combined with the national security strategy, provide the framework for the organization of the army. It is therefore essential to understand how the army integrates into the nation's military strategy. The Australian military strategy is structured to achieve three strategic tasks. Those tasks are defending Australia, contributing to the security of the Immediate Neighborhood and peacetime national tasks. Defending Australia is the most important task for the ADF and therefore it must maintain a standing military to defeat attacks on Australia. The government's strategy for this is to employ three governing principles.

The first is the development of a self-reliant defence force. This "simply means the we (Australia) should not rely on others having either the capacity or the willingness to defend our country if we have not taken the effort to provide effectively for our own defence" *(Australian Government 2000, 47)*. This is not to say that Australia will not need to maintain alliances and therefore interoperability but rather that defense of Australia is an Australian responsibility.

The second principle is the maintenance of a maritime strategy. This strategy is designed to create a "defence in depth that is to be achieved primarily through control of the sea-air approaches, on the logical assumption that the most likely approach (to

Australia) is through the island chain to the north giving a requirement for emphasis in the north and northwest of the continent" *(Headquarters Australian Defence Force 1993, 3-34).* The maritime strategy aims to defeat incursions before they reach the mainland through the application of sea and air power.

The final principle in defending Australia is the conduct of proactive operations. This principle functions hand-in-hand with the maritime strategy. It does not refute the overall defensive posture for Australian security but merely serves to reinforce the desire to establish a defense in depth. In this case defense in depth is offensive in nature and "would seek to attack hostile forces as far from our (Australia's) shore as possible" (*Australian Government 2000, 48*). The implications of this strategic task for the army is the need for the army to be capable of defending the Australian continent, supporting the RAAF and the RAN in the execution of the maritime strategy, and being prepared to conduct expeditionary warfare to defeat a hostile attack as far out as possible.

The second strategic task is contributing to the security of Australia's Immediate Neighborhood. This focuses the military on operations in support of Indonesia, East Timor, and Papua New Guinea specifically and across the wider Southeast Asian and Southwest Pacific Regions. In achieving this task there are two facets to military operations, the resisting of aggression and the conduct of lower level operations.

The first facet is to support the nations in the immediate neighborhood by assisting them in their defense in the unlikely event they are attacked. Essential to this facet is the development of effective operational and tactical relationships with these nations. This will be achieved through defense to defense tasks and bilateral training and exercise arrangements.

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The second facet is the conduct of low level operations. These are operations "in which the opponent engages in politically motivated hostile acts ranging from non-violent infringements of, to small scale military actions against, Australian sovereignty or interests" *(Headquarters Australian Defence Force 1994, L-7)*. They are likely to result in military missions such as peace operations, international humanitarian relief, and evacuation operations. These missions will require the ADF to be highly responsive and capable of sustaining the effort beyond twelve months. This strategic task represents some unique organizational issues for the army. To accomplish this task the army needs to be capable of mounting peace operations within twenty-eight days, conduct humanitarian relief within seventy-two hours, and mounting and executing non-combatant evacuations within seven days. Now all these missions will be highly dependant on other services supporting what will largely be army led missions, but that is beyond the scope of this analysis.

The final strategic task is peacetime national tasks. These tasks are mostly in support of other government agencies but relate directly to the security or protection of the nation. They are wide reaching tasks that utilize readily available manpower and capabilities of the ADF to reinforce civil agencies. Tasks will include support to coastal surveillance as a defense against people smuggling and illegal immigration, reinforcement of civil agencies during national emergencies, and maintenance of national counter-terrorist capability. These are non-combat and non-standard tasks for the army. These tasks are important because they support the overall intent of the national security strategy of protecting Australians and their interests. The implications for the army in supporting this strategic task is that it must provide coastal surveillance forces to

maintain vigilance for incursions, train all available manpower in basic emergency skills to reinforce civil agencies, and most importantly maintain a highly skilled counter-terrorist force.

Hence the national security strategy assigns the army nine essential tasks. The first is to defend continental Australia from incursions. The second is to support the RAAF and RAN in the execution of the maritime strategy by providing security and air defense forces. Thirdly is to be prepared to conduct expeditionary warfare to defeat hostile attacks as far from Australia as possible. The fourth is to be capable of mounting peace enforcement and peacekeeping operations within twenty-eight days. The fifth is to conduct humanitarian relief operations within seventy-two hours. The sixth task is to mount non-combatant evacuations of Australian and approved foreign nationals within seven days. The seventh is to provide coastal surveillance forces to civil agencies in order to maintain vigilance for incursions. The eighth task is to support civil agencies in times of national disaster. Finally and most importantly is to maintain a highly skilled counter-terrorist force.

Defending Australia

Defence 2000 describes a full scale invasion of Australia as the " . . . least likely military contingency Australia might face"*(Australian Government 2000, 23).* If it did occur strategic indicators would allow Australia to complete full mobilization. The next option would be a major attack on Australia to inflict damage on infrastructure, population, and economy in order to divert Australia's attention away from the threat's main objective in the region. This situation is considered a remote possibility but if mounted by a threat it would mean a short strategic warning time. The final issue for the

defense of Australia is a minor attack aimed at putting pressure on Australia's national policy. This is considered the most likely option for a threat against Australian sovereignty and again this is likely to have a short warning time.

To counter these threats and defend Australia the army must be capable of supporting the nation's maritime strategy. This strategy involves the striking and defeating of threats in the sea-air approaches to Australia. These sea-air approaches are predominantly those approaches that stretch across the northern coastline between Indonesia, East Timor, and Papua New Guinea. Other approaches from the Indian and Pacific Oceans are considered less likely given the resources needed to mount the operation and the limited ability to achieve strategic surprise. The strategy requires the ADF to conduct operations from the various fixed operating bases in Northern Australia. The most suitable bases are Darwin, which has the best infrastructure for command and control and porting facilities, and Katherine, which has a permanently established air base and is a key node on the northern Australian road network. Other key installations that feature in the strategy include the readily expandable bare bases in Derby and Weipa, and the important infrastructure, economic, and power projection bases of Broome, Mount Isa, and Cairns. However, it is unlikely that a threat can engage these key installations without neutralizing either Darwin or Katherine first. Therefore these economic and power projection bases are the ones that need to be defended first.

The threat's most likely method of operation is infiltration of Australia's borders by small groups, the conduct of harassing and sabotage missions against key installations, and the execution of concentrated raids to remove specific installations vital to Australia's strategy. This would be conducted at the same time as threat naval operations

interdict shipping and threat air operations conduct raids to suppress the RAAF. The defeating of naval and air threats will be the domain of the other services. It is therefore important that the army be able to effect a quick and effective defense of Darwin and Katherine as a priority and retain a capability to quickly protect at least one additional base while either reserves are activated or maritime and air incursions are defeated. The defense of these economic and power projection bases is broken into two basic tasks. The first is the defense of the economic and power projection bases from ground attack. The second is the protection of key installations within these economic and power projection bases from air attack.

The first task will involve the detection of threats, defense of approximately six to nine vital installations per economic and power projection base, and the defeat of land based threat forces. The detection forces needed must be capable of broad area surveillance to detect initial incursions and then hand off threats to the detection and tracking assets in the focal area for the economic and power projection bases. To support this task the army will need two distinct detection forces, one a broad area detection force and the other a detection force directly linked to the protection force. Australia current has a broad area surveillance force called the Regional Force Surveillance Units. These are army reserve units that are local to an area of Australia's northern coastline. For this they are very useful in detecting changes in their environment. However they lack the speed of response during an emergency because they are army reserves and have to be called up. Therefore in a short warning contingency the broad area forces have only limited surveillance coverage until the army reserve can mobilize. To overcome this problem the area surveillance force needs an regular component to fill this role while the

army reserve concentrates. Most likely this regular component needs to cover only key infiltration routes while army reserves are mobilized. The number of key infiltration routes is unlikely to exceed eight or nine in the short term given the short time a threat has to achieve surprise. To cover this a surveillance force of company size could cover three routes and therefore only one regular surveillance battalion, approximately 400 men, is required to fill the short fall.

Once a threat is detected and tracked in the broad area it should be handed to reconnaissance assets supporting the defensive or protection force. The mission of this force would be to provide early warning for protection forces and allow response forces to be reacted quickly and accurately against threats. Currently the army does not possess a dedicated tactical reconnaissance force. This will be an important feature in the successful execution of Australia's strategy.

The next component the force needs is one to protect vital installations. Studies of these economic and power projection bases have identified each base having between six and nine vital assets that require protecting. Each point is assessed to be between a platoon and company size task. Given the number of vital installations within each economic and power projection base two battalion-size units should be able to cover the task. The nature of these tasks lends itself to the protection force being conventional infantry/armor units depending on the terrain. In the case of Darwin a protection force will need to be capable of operating predominantly in an urban environment, whereas the Katherine protection force should be capable of operating in more open terrain. This lends itself to the Darwin force being mainly a light/motorized force and the Katherine force being mechanized/motorized. This raises the issue of command and control. As

there are two battalion-size units within the economic and power projection base it is therefore logical that they have a brigade headquarters available to coordinate their efforts. Additionally the direct correlation between the tactical reconnaissance force and the protection force tasks suggests that a brigade also command this reconnaissance force. Hence this capability should be raised in each brigade organization.

Finally the force needs a decisive response force that is highly mobile and equipped with sufficient firepower to defeat or destroy a threat. In essence this force gives the commander the flexibility to deny the installations to the threat. Once again it will need to be structured on the threat and environmental factors for each economic and power projection base. The threat in most circumstances is likely to be a company size raiding party attempting to disrupt naval and air operations. It is therefore logical that after it has infiltrated it will concentrate before launching an attack. It is while it is concentrated that the response force should destroy the threat. In order to defeat the threat the response force should have sufficient strength to achieve the mission. In this case a minimum of a battalion should be dedicated to the task.

Environmental factors will affect the nature and application of the response force. In the case of Darwin it probably needs to be a helicopter-borne light infantry force supported by long-range mobile artillery and combat engineers to fix and destroy the enemy. For Katherine however the force should be a mechanized task force of tanks and infantry fighting vehicles again supported by long-range mobile artillery and mobile combat engineers. This will give the commander the necessary mobility, firepower, and strength to defeat the threat.

To conduct operations in the focal areas the army needs a brigade per vital economic and power projection base and an additional one to protect an additional economic and power projection base or to add flexibility to the force. The additional brigade needs to be either a light/motorized infantry or mechanized/motorized brigade. The recommendation would be a light/motorized infantry force because it is easier to train and is strategically more mobile and has wider application beyond Australian shores. Each brigade should be organized with a command and control element, a tactical reconnaissance force, and two battalions to protect and a battalion to respond. Ideally these battalions should be interchangeable. Additionally the force should have supporting assets to provide mobility, firepower, and logistics to these brigades. Each of these units should be of battalion size in order to provide sufficient levels of support, redundancy, and flexibility to the brigade. In adopting a brigade size organization like this the brigade strength is likely to swell to approximately 4,000 men, which is a growth of approximately 500 men from current brigade strength.

The other key army task in supporting maritime and air operations in the sea-air gap is the provision of ground based air defense. The current Australian capability is in the army and is limited to short range low-level systems in one battalion. The proliferation of standoff weapons in regional air forces now gives threats the ability to strike vital installations from longer ranges. These ranges are beyond the capabilities of the current air defense system. It is therefore important that Australia develop an air defense system that can defend vital installations and defeat air threats. In order to defend the vital installations there should be sufficient air defense units. Current experience in Australia is that it takes one battalion to defend an economic and power projection base

like Katherine, therefore Australia needs three battalions to defend Darwin, Katherine, and at least one other base from air threats. Additionally the capability of current systems needs to be improved to at least cover medium level threats. This will counter enemy standoff weapons. In terms of organization these three air defense battalions should be organized into a single brigade for unity of effort and ease of coordination with the RAAF. The brigade is likely to have an approximate strength of 1,700 men. This 1,700 man organization should break down into three 500-man battalions, and a command and control headquarters of 200 men. The raising of the Australia capability will significantly improve the freedom of action available to the RAN and RAAF in prosecuting the war.

The addition of a third brigade for additional defensive tasks gives the force the flexibility to conduct proactive operations. These proactive operations will be conducted in the Immediate Neighborhood. These operations will be characterized by amphibious and air land operations. The aims of these operations is not the occupation of territory but rather harassment and interdiction to support the sea-air campaign. This further reinforces the concept of the third brigade in the regular army being a light infantry force.

The adoption of these structures to meet the short term demands of defending Australia the army needs three brigades totaling approximately 12,000 men, an air defense brigade of 1,700 men and a surveillance battalion of 400 men. For operational and training purposes it would be advantageous to group these forces under a central command. In this case a divisional headquarters would be ideal and provide a central command for the ground defense of Australia. The division would need additional assets to sustain and control the force. These will include at least a general support logistics battalion and a communications battalion to coordinate the efforts of the division and

provide electronic warfare and information systems support. Both of these organizations would require a strength of 700 men. This leaves the army with a regular division with a strength of approximately 16,000 men.

<u>Security of the Immediate Neighborhood</u>

Security of the Immediate Neighborhood is Australia's second strategic task and probably the mostly likely task the military will execute. This task focuses on the possible requirement for military intervention into Indonesia, East Timor, or Papua New Guinea but is not exclusive to this region and may include operations in Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific. The reasons for the intervention are likely to be varied. Reasons could be to stabilize the effect of separatist movements on existing governments, the proliferation of piracy and people smuggling, and the increasing instability of political systems. Intervention could be in support of the legitimate government, to support international sanctions, or to aid oppressed groups that are representative of the population. A significant characteristic of the intervention will be the international and national legitimacy of Australia's intervention. This fact was clearly demonstrated during Australia's United Nations sanction intervention into East Timor.

Australia's strategy in this task is to contribute to regional security through effective engagement. The engagement will seek to legitimize the group most representative of the population and establish a stable environment. Stabilization of the environment will not be limited to stopping violence but will include the provision of humanitarian relief and extraction of Australian citizens until the environment is stable. In achieving this task there are two characteristics of military intervention, resisting of aggression and the conduct of low intensity operations. As opposed to the task of

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defending Australia, which subordinates the army to supporting other services, this task will see the army have primacy. Specific essential tasks associated with this task are the execution of internationally endorsed peacekeeping and peace enforcement missions, bilateral humanitarian assistance activities, and unilateral non-combatant evacuation operations.

The most essential task for the army is the effective conduct of peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations. Australia's experience in this area is extensive with most experiences being international successes such as the execution of United Nations Transitional Authority Cambodia mission in 1992. A feature of these operations is the short warning nature of the deployment. Invariably the warning for the deployment can be quite long however the time between the order to go and actual deployment is usually quite short. These missions have three distinct phases: early entry, stabilizing, and sustaining.

The first phase is the early or forced entry phase, and is characterized by rapid strategic mobility by sea and air. Forces must be trained, equipped, and ready to deploy on short notice. The geopolitical environment in Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific will place great emphasis on the need to conduct an amphibious operation. These characteristics lend themselves to the selection of a light, strategically mobile force with firepower that is well integrated into the joint warfighting team. Given these characteristics and the requirement to have a sufficient force to stabilize the environment, the most logical conclusion for the army is to have a light infantry brigade ready and prepared for this mission. This brigade should contain all the assets held by a light brigade in a defense of Australia task. Sufficient helicopter lift assets to conduct

effective amphibious operations and tactical mobility in the area of operations should support the brigade. To achieve this the brigade should be supported by at least a utility helicopter battalion.

The next phase is the stabilizing phase. This is characterized by a continued high threat of hostile action and includes a force buildup if required. As the environment becomes more stabilized humanitarian aid agencies, both government and non-government, would arrive to commence the rebuilding. It is important during this phase that the military have good interaction with the population and these agencies. The phase is finalized by the preparation to hand over the mission either to a sustaining force or a local force. This phase lends itself to another brigade size force reinforcing the early entry forces and the inclusion of a senior headquarters to coordinate the effort. Additional command and control issues would include either assuming control or Australian forces being subsumed into a multi-national command. In addition to reinforcing security elements is a requirement for civil affairs specialists to de-conflict and integrate military and civil operations in theater. Australia does not possess a civil affairs capability. If these types of operations are going to continue into the future then this capability needs to be developed and made operational. It is likely to be only a small force and could therefore be predominantly army reserve except for a few regular teams for reactive missions.

The final phase is the sustaining component. This is characterized by the establishment of routine operations over a long period of time. Risks during this phase are much reduced and preparations are being made for hand over to the local forces. During this time the primacy of the civil infrastructure commences. The low risk nature

and primacy of civil infrastructure lend this phase to the employment of the army reserve. Force structure is unlikely to increase and sufficient time can be made between call out and deployment. This would be ideal for relieving the regular components to be ready for immediate concerns and improves the overall experience of the army reserve. There is no major issue to overcome in this matter and that is the limited federal legislative support for this approach. It is a worthwhile point to consider.

Australia's unique geographic position, international acceptability, and national infrastructure make it ideally suited to respond to environmental and humanitarian disasters. These events are characterized by the occurrence of a cataclysmic event that is usually beyond the control of the host nation. Two good cases in point are the 1998 tidal wave that struck the north coast of Papua New Guinea and the drought in the Indonesian state of West Papua in 1997. The ability to respond to these events was beyond the capability of the host nation. In both cases Australia responded because it had the capability and felt the moral responsibility to act. The additional factor is the international expectation to respond when disasters occur in the nation's backyard.

These events have required the military to be rapidly deployable, be capable of employing specialist and technical skills, and to have sufficient tactical mobility to be effective. For the army these factors have the following implications: rapid deployability is a requirement because early assistance in a disaster is essential for the welfare of the people and the necessity to move quickly once political approval from the host nation is received. Therefore forces should be portable enough to travel in RAAF aircraft.

The second factor is that disasters usually need more than general-purpose warfighting forces. This not to say they will not be needed but they will not be the main

effort. Their function will be to protect the specialist forces. Specialist forces are likely to be medical and infrastructure (engineer) elements that will relieve suffering and establish essential services. This will be paramount to the success of the operation. This was well demonstrated by the medical surgical team that deployed quickly to Papua New Guinea in 1998 after the tidal wave.

Finally, the force needs to be able to relieve the suffering across the affected area and not just at the point of entry.   For this the army needs tactical mobility which will take two forms. One will be a helicopter unit for rapid mobility and the other will be a surface transport unit for more sustaining and development tasks. Both will be essential to the enduring success of the operation. These transport forces are not specialists and could come from forces required for defending Australia.

Forces that need to be maintained to support this mission are lightweight medical units that are surgically capable, civil affairs elements, and engineers for infrastructure development. Other forces may be required but these are likely to be the main force types. These organizations are likely to be small; for example the medical unit that performed so well in Papua New Guinea was merely a company size force. To sustain a high readiness capability the army will need three of these companies, one training, one ready, and one resting and refurbishing. This model will be equally applicable to construction engineers required for the task. These forces should be centrally commanded to maximize flexibility and responsiveness. Australia currently has two understrength field hospitals of approximately 200 men each, and a range of regular and army reserve construction engineer units, a total of approximately 700 regular personnel,

which can respond to these missions. These units should be retained and increased in strength to ensure they can maintain responsiveness.

The final essential task the ADF will need to undertake in the region is non-combatant evacuations of Australian and approved foreign nationals. These types of tasks will be characterized by short warning and rapid instability in the designated nation, as was demonstrated in 1997 during the internal unrest in Cambodia. This situation prompted Australia to deploy a lightweight force to Malaysia and then Cambodia to recover Australian citizens trapped by the fighting. This has been a common task for the ADF over the past ten years. These missions have been mounted by all services but the army usually has the preponderance of forces for these missions. The forces that have been made available for these tasks have included a reconnaissance force, usually Special Forces, a protection force, evacuee screening force to prevent unauthorized host nation stowaways, and a tactical transport force. The reconnaissance force has predominantly been a Special Forces unit, which can conduct clandestine insertions and provide real time intelligence. Additionally it can conduct direct action missions and immediate hostage recovery. The protection force has been a conventional infantry unit and, given the amphibious nature of the region, these infantry units have been light units. The evacuee screening force is there to confirm identity and check for suitability for movement. It is predominantly made up of intelligence, psychological, and medical personnel. It is usually not a designated unit but a mix of personnel with general skills in the above areas. The final element is the tactical transport force, which can ferry evacuees from point of collection to the screening and point of departure. Operational experience suggests these elements should be helicopters or, in the case of amphibious

forces, landing craft for shore-to-ship movement. The army operates both types of forces and their current strength is suitable for maintaining support for this essential task.

Peace time National Tasks

The missions and tasks of the army are not limited to only wartime or hostile engagements. It has important roles in supporting the nation. These roles will aim to support the nation's wider interests. This is the ADF and, more importantly, the army's third strategic task. Defence 2000 describes this as the "ADF will also be called upon to undertake a number of regular or occasional tasks in support of wider national interests. These include specific and ongoing commitments to coastal surveillance and emergency management, as well as ad hoc support to wider community needs" (*Australian Government 2000, 53).* This will not be an army only task and the army will support the wider ADF involvement. From this wider involvement comes three missions for the army: provision coastal surveillance forces to civil agencies in order to maintain vigilance for incursions, train to reinforce civil agencies in times of national disaster and, most importantly, maintain a highly skilled counter-terrorist force to protect Australia from weapons of mass destruction and terrorist acts.

With 12,000 miles of coastline and much of the northern coastline within a day's sail of the Immediate Neighborhood, it becomes important for Australia to be ever vigilant. This first mission in peacetime is an extension of the broad area surveillance task identified in the defense of Australia. It requires forces constantly deployed monitoring and reporting incursions. The significant difference is that the incursions are from illegal immigrants rather than hostile forces, although arguably these immigrants are likely to be hostile if apprehended. The other difference is the restrictive rules of

engagement associated with this mission. Forces will need to know rules of engagement and maintain the necessary skills to apply these rules. The need to maintain these skills lends itself to this mission being a predominantly regular army component task, thus reinforcing the concept of having a dedicated regular surveillance force in the regular component. Further the surveillance force must be able to operate in conjunction with the RAN, which has primacy in coastal defense. This implies the force must maintain a high level of joint training and experience in coordinating with the RAN, hence another reason for maintaining a regular army component. This is an important task and addresses a real and current mission the ADF undertakes.

The next mission in support of peacetime tasks is support for national disasters. Like the region Australia suffers its own fair number of national disasters. These disasters include flood, bush fire, and drought, and like the region these disasters can be beyond the means of civil resources. It is important to note though that any military involvement will be controlled by civil organizations. To support this mission the army provides a number of technological resources such as helicopters and vehicles, as well as the most important resource for disasters: available manpower. This is a non-standard mission for the army and will require some additional training. What is important in this situation is the maintenance of basic skills and available manpower to achieve this mission. This is well within the capabilities of the force already discussed and therefore further force requirements are unlikely.

The final essential task is the provision of a well-trained and equipped counter terrorist force. The terrorist events in New York City and Washington on 11 September 2001 have forced nations, including Australia, to review and identify their vulnerabilities

to terrorist acts. Concerns over this issue are further exacerbated by the accessibility of weapons of mass destruction. This has served to reinforce the requirement for Australia to have a suitable and ready counter-terrorist force. The force must be able to recover hostages and counter weapons of mass destruction. The recovery of hostages is an existing capability in the ADF and is provided by the Special Air Service Regiment. The capability however does lack a designated aviation support unit that is equipped and skilled in counter-terrorist operations. Currently a utility helicopter battalion that supports all assigned missions provides this capability. The absence of this capability degrades the effectiveness of the force. The other weakness is the absence of a dedicated nuclear, biological and chemical response force. One was established by the army during the 2000 Olympics but was stood down after the event. Since 11 September 2001, Australia has realized it must retain this capability in order to protect the nation. Therefore a change in the force that is essential for the future security of Australia is the maintenance of counter-terrorist force with a dedicated nuclear, biological, and chemical response force.

CHAPTER 6

FUNDING THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY

The Asia Pacific strategic environment has a number of security challenges ranging from globalization to domestic instability. This creates a number of policy issues for the Australian government, the most pressing issue being the application of military power to protect Australia and its interests while maintaining a secure environment. Essential to resolving this issue is ensuring that the ADF and its components have a clear set of tasks, the appropriate organization, and sufficient resources to complete the assigned tasks. In the case of the Australian Army the tasks are clearly outlined in Defence 2000. From these the required combat organization can be determined. This organization has been estimated to be a regular army infantry division with supporting troops. In total, the combat force should have a strength of approximately 20,000 personnel. This is a marked increase over the current combat force of approximately 13,000 personnel. This leaves unanswered the issue of how to resource the army sufficiently to meet these tasks with this organization.

Defence 2000 explains how the ADF will be funded. In short the plan is "To fund the program of development for Australia's armed forces that is set out in the defence capability plan, the government estimates that defence spending will need to grow by average of about three percent per annum in real terms over the next decade" *(Australian Government 2000, 117).* There are a number of factors that will affect this commitment. The factors are both external and internal to the ADF. The principal external factor is going to be Australia's economic performance in the coming years. The other most significant factor is going to be government spending on other programs, such as social

welfare. These external factors will directly affect the defense budget. The army budget

will commensurately be affected by external factors but the magnitude of the affect may

not be carried across from the defense budget. Internally the challenges are going to be

the cost of modernization of the army versus additional manning to meet assigned tasks.

The other is going to be the inter-service rivalry for funding. While these are traditional

problems they do significantly affect the availability of funds for the army to meet its

assigned tasks.

Critical to the availability of ADF funding is the performance of the Australian

economy. This is because when the Australian economy is performing poorly the

government needs to resource programs other than defense. Therefore a well performing

economy is in the best interest of defense. Two methods of measuring the performance

of the economy are the level of change in the inflation rate and the trends in the

unemployment rate.

The inflation rate is the study of prices in the economy. The Australian Bureau of

Statistics describes the study of prices as. " . . . a key factor in the operation of an

economy. Price indexes, which provide summary measures of the movements in various

categories of prices, are used extensively to analyze and monitor price behavior, and to

adjust government payments such as pensions" (*ABS 2002).* The inflation rate is the

most important price index and measures the percentage increase in prices of goods and

services over a given time period. Normally the time period is once every three months.

Additionally the inflation rate can be used to identify stability in the economy by

determining whether there is a constant and low percentage change in prices. If there is a

low and constant change in prices then there is less impetus for the government to intervene in the economy through spending.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics figures for inflation indicates inflation have remained low and constant for the past ten years. This is reinforced by the fact that the inflation rate in 1992 was 2.0 percent and in 2001 the rate was 2.6 percent. This has two effects on the military. The first is that defense spending at current levels is not likely to under go any significant cuts. The other factor is that the inflation rate reflects the rate of increase in prices. Therefore by reviewing the defense budget against the inflation rate a conclusion can be deduced on whether the defense budget has retained value in real terms. Further analysis of defense budgets against the inflation rate indicates that between 1993 and 1996 defense lost over $600 million due to no change in monetary value of the defense budget. So when the government announced a $500 million increase in defense spending in Defence 2000 it was arguably only being increased in value to account for inflation. Finally the study of inflation indicates that the Australian economy is performing well and that the defense budget is in no danger of being cut in monetary terms, but may require additional funds to account for losses in real terms between 1993 and 1996.

The second measure of the economy that will impact on government spending and therefore affect the defense budget is the unemployment rate. It is an important economic indicator. It is " . . . the number of unemployed persons expressed as a percentage of the labor force" *(ABS, 2002)* and is not the number of people unemployed. It is a meaningful economic measure because it is directly connected to the government's social welfare expenditure. Therefore any increase in the unemployment rate will force

the government to review current expenditure in order to support the social welfare budget. In the past some of those resources have come from the defense budget. This was at a time when Australia's strategic environment was considered benign. This is not the case today with deployments to East Timor and Bougainville, and the proliferation of illegal immigrants. It is a time when hard decisions between defense spending and social welfare need to be made. To support this view it is important to review the unemployment rate for the past ten years to determine if it will be a factor in government spending.

Australian Bureau of Statistics figures indicate that the unemployment rate has been on a steady decline since 1992. In 1992 the figure peaked at 10.7 percent of the labor force. This figure has steadily dropped to 6.1 percent in 2000. While the marked fall in unemployment can be directly connected to government expenditure it has not come at the expense of the defense budget. As mentioned above the only degradation in the defense budget has been in the limited application of inflation to the budget. The forecasts for unemployment look bright with economists predicting it will continue to fall over the next three years. If this is the case the defense budget and the increase in spending outlined in the Defence 2000 is safe for the short term. Between 2005 and 2010 economists are not predicting what the rate of unemployment will be and therefore predictions on defense budget pressures is uncertain beyond 2005.

The most significant financial challenge the army faces in the defense budget is what to do with the available funding. The decision of what to do is best simplified into one choice and that is how much to modernize versus sufficient manpower to meet the challenge. While this is the choice to be made it is not a simple one. Australia currently

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faces block obsolescences with its OH58 reconnaissance helicopters, M113 armored personnel carriers, and artillery fleets. Much of this hardware must be updated to reduce increasing fleet maintenance costs and maintain interoperability with major allies and regional neighbors. Acting against the modernization program is the requirement to have sufficient troops to meet the challenges of the strategic environment and national security strategy. The most pressing challenge to meet is the defense of Australia task, which requires approximately 20,000 regular army combat personnel. At current operating costs this will amount to $1,609 million. This is a vast increase on $1,268 million, which is currently spent on operating costs. In fact it is a 21 percent increase in operating costs. This is the most significant hurdle to be crossed in making the army affordable. This can be overcome many ways. The first is to forego the modernization programs and accept the risk that the equipment can last beyond 2010. The second is accepting risk in achieving the army's three essential tasks by using available manpower. Third, seek additional funding from within the defense budget but this has limited versatility as the other services have significant financial problems meeting their modernization and assigned tasks. The finally way is seeking further funding from the government. This option may now be possible given the current strength of the Australian economy.

As alluded to above the other internal financial challenge is the inter-service rivalry for funding. The RAN and RAAF face similar problems to the army in that their equipment requires modernization and they have insufficient personnel to meet the current assigned tasks. In the case of the RAN the retirement of the three destroyers has left it without an effective air defense platform and patrol boats, the workhorse of the illegal immigration operations, are becoming difficult to maintain and are due for

replacement. The RAAF is also plagued with the modernization problems of the aging F111 and Caribou fleets needing urgent replacement and the air defense capabilities being improved through the purchase of new airborne warning and control aircraft and upgrades to the F18 fighter. These RAN and RAAF capability developments are not only essential to these services but also vital to the army in achieving its mission. The implication of having these RAN and RAAF modernization programs is the large cost associated with their highly technological and all encompassing equipment. For example a RAN ship is an all in one unit and cannot be scaled back to half a ship. The army on the other hand has highly technological programs but they can be scaled down in terms of numbers. For example the army plans to modernize 350 M113 armored personnel carriers and if funding becomes tight the program can be scaled back to 300 vehicles. This is one method of stretching the defense budget but it will be at the expense of some army capability improvements.

The labor decisions among the services are a little more straight forward. In terms of manpower each of the services spends approximately the same per capita. The RAN and the RAAF spend $53,301 per regular serviceman. The army is slightly less at $53,041 per regular soldier. The overall effect is that a decision to increase the army cannot be offset by the other services having more expensive labor, as it would be a direct one for one exchange.

Defence 2000 attempts to set a positive direction for financing the military but this financing does not have sufficient latitude to meet the missions assigned to the ADF. Specifically the army will be short approximately 5,000 regular combat personnel to meet the strategic challenges of the region. As a side note the Australian Army is significantly

understaffed by comparison to traditional allies and regional neighbors if total population is compared with army strength. The US Army by comparison has a ratio of one uniformed soldier per 563 citizens and Singapore's ratio is even less at one in every 323 citizens. Australia, whose geographic challenges and strategic responsibilities are extremely large, is at one in every 837 citizens. This alone means that government must carefully consider the employment of the Australian Army as it cannot meet the same sorts of challenges its allies can.

Key economic indicators demonstrate that Australia will have very few economic challenges in the near future. This is likely to ease pressures in other areas of government spending. The ambitious defense strategy assigns the army tasks that are potentially beyond its current capability because insufficient funds are available to man the force. This strain on finances will continue while the military faces issues such as block obsolescences and regional insecurity. In this environment the army is faced with three possible solutions: The first is deferring some capability enhancement projects in lieu of achieving assigned tasks; secondly, seek a change in strategy to make the tasks within the capability of the current budget; the last option is to seek additional funding while the economy is solid and therefore achieve all assigned tasks and capability developments. While the last seems the most ideal the reality is that all options must be incorporated to meet the demands of Australia's strategic environment.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is clear that the INTERFET operation in East Timor and Defence 2000 are landmark events in Australia's strategic planning. For the army, these two events have marked a change in strategy from continental defense to offshore operations in defense of Australia and its interests. This change in focus means that the army must be regionally focused and readily deployable to guarantee Australia's security and promote regional stability. This change has been brought about because of a change in the strategic environment and national security strategy.

Analysis of the strategic environment identified the Asia Pacific region as Australia's area of interest. It is a politically, economically, and socially dynamic region that has global influence and importance. It is also a region that is isolated by ethnicity and culture from Australia but is inextricably linked to Australia and the rest of the world by globalization, the international primacy of the US, and influence of the UN. The study identified four areas within the region that are of direct interest to Australian national security strategy.

The first was Southeast Asia. Major features of this region were the strong economic influence of nations and associations in the area. The primacy of ASEAN on economic and cultural cohesion in the area will be the most significant influence. The predominance of ASEAN and the binding nature of ethnicity will see Australia's strategic relationship of coexistence rather than integration remain the same over the next ten years. Adding to the tension in this dynamic area is the prevalence of piracy and illegal immigration. These two issues bring the area closer together because of the international

nature of the problem. The most troubling issue identified for the area is the growth of nationalism. This issue will be the major reason for instability in Southeast Asia for the next ten years. All these issues promise to bring the area together in some cases and tear it apart in others. Maintaining a secure and stable environment in this area will be a multinational challenge. However, Australia must understand that its strategic relationship in the area will change. The nature of this relationship creates many challenges for the army. Those challenges include maintaining close ties and being interoperable with the nations in the area, being capable of anti-piracy and illegal immigration operations, and being prepared to support both regional and UN peace initiatives to resolve nationalist problems. This means the army must be capable and organized for coalition operations, maritime interdiction, and peace operations.

The Southwest Pacific is the second area. This tropical paradise is an area of deep-seated tribal and ethnic problems. These problems have promoted lawlessness that is almost uncontrollable and threatens Australia's citizens and economic interests in the area. Australia's strategic relationship in this area has been predominately that of a political and economic leader. This relationship is unlikely to change but will cause an increase in resentment. The strategic challenge identified in this region is to protect Australians and national economic interests, and to promote political security and stability. The implications of this on the army are the maintenance of a flexible responsive evacuation force and the ability to conduct effective peace operations.

The third and most important area in Australia's strategic environment is the area of the Immediate Neighborhood. This area consists of three nations: Indonesia, East Timor, and Papua New Guinea, and has a diverse range of destabilizing problems. The

study revealed that Indonesia poses the most immediate concern for regional stabilization. Economic structural issues, military reform, and ethnic separatist movements are the challenges that could destabilize this nation. East Timor will continue to require Australia's assistance as it develops a national identity and status in the area. In the long term, Papua New Guinea represents Australia's greatest strategic challenge. It is a nation with an unsustainable relationship between its population and its economic resources. In the long term Papua New Guinea will be Australia's biggest security issue. These nations and challenges represent Australia's most important security focus. Therefore, Australia's army must be ready to play an important role in this area, a role that will include supporting the existing nation states through continual engagement, being prepared to reinforce these nations with forces as required, and in the case of Papua New Guinea being prepared to secure and occupy in order to stabilize this nation economically and politically.

The final area in Australia's strategic environment is continental Australia. Australia's geographic location on the planet and harsh northern environment offers Australia protection from large-scale invasion and occupation. The isolated nature of the northern Australian communities and limited transport network, however, makes Australia vulnerable to penetration and interdiction. To defeat this the army must be capable of protecting economic and power projection centers and intercepting these threats. For operations of this nature the regular army must be capable of detecting, protecting against, and responding to threats while sustaining military operations until the army reserve can be activated. The defense of continental Australia has been and will continue to be central to Australia's strategic policy.

Additional to the conditions set by the strategic environment there are the demands set out in the national strategy. The study of the national strategy identified three key missions for the ADF. The first mission and most important was the defense of continental Australia. This involved a predominantly maritime strategy with the RAN and RAAF gaining command of the sea-air gap between Australia and the immediate neighborhood. The second mission was to maintain the security of the region in order to protect Australia's national interests. The concept of operations for the ADF in this mission ranged from bilateral and multilateral defense initiatives to proactive peace operations under a regional or UN mandate. The final mission was the conduct of peacetime national tasks. The tasks under this mission ranged from defense aid to the civil power during major national crises to defense aid to the civil community during natural disasters. The study noted that the army was likely to be the primary service that would support these tasks but will play a supporting role to civil agencies.

To meet the demands of the first strategic mission the army has a supporting role to the other services. This supporting role involves the protection of Australia's economic and power projection centers in northern Australia. To achieve this role the regular army needs to be structured to detect incursions onto the Australian mainland, protect the economic and power projection centers, respond and defeat the incursions, and sustain the regular army until the army reserve can be activated for the mission. For this mission the regular army needs a combat force of one division with a range of mechanized, motorized, and air assault forces. Supporting the division should be a range of combat support and combat service support units, including construction engineers, line haul transport units, intelligence support, aviation, and communication units.

Outside this divisional force there is requirement for a significant air defense capability to protect economic and power projection centers from air attack. Current capabilities are woefully insufficient in performance and size. It is estimated the army needs an air defense brigade to achieve these tasks. The study assessed that the combat component of the regular army should have a strength of 20,000.

The second mission identified in the study was the maintenance of regional security to protect Australia's national interests. This mission is considered the most likely one to be undertaken in the next ten years by the ADF. In conducting these missions the army will have the preponderance of forces. To achieve this mission regular army combat forces will need to be rapidly deployable to secure and stabilize areas within the region. The mission will involve peace enforcement and peacekeeping tasks. In protecting Australia's interests the regular army will also have to be prepared to conduct unilateral evacuation operations. This will require the army to be well integrated with the other services. As was assessed in the study the regular army needs a brigade capable of rapid deployment, a brigade on standby to replace or reinforce the first brigade, and a third brigade to train and act as a contingency force for a rotation plan. Additional support forces would be required to maintain such a deployment. The force composition for this support task would be a logistic support brigade providing a composite support battalion for each brigade. This plan would support a long-term commitment to stabilizing the area and allow time for the army reserve to be prepared to undertake the task. This is the most likely operational contingency for the regular army over the next ten years.

The final mission is support to and conduct of peacetime national tasks. This mission involves the provision of defense aid to the civil power and defense aid to the civil community.

Defense aid to the civil power is all the tasks associated with supporting the maintenance of law and order. The study did not envision this being a daily task but rather the provision of specialist forces for national crises, such as a terrorist act. To achieve this the study identified the requirement for a well-equipped and trained counter-terrorist force. The force required Special Forces recovery elements, specialist tactical mobility, and chemical and biological response forces. The force would be organized under a central command. Current counter-terrorist forces are not established in this manner.

The second task, defense aid to the civil community, is significantly different in that it does not have an identifiable threat or the threat is usually a natural disaster. The nature of this task does not call upon the army's specialist warfighting skills but rather on its ability to rapidly deploy manpower and equipment. This task would see the army in a supporting role to civil emergency agencies, and specialist tasks in these situations would be conducted by specialist emergency forces, like the Country Fire Authority or State Emergency Services. The study considered this mission within the current size and organization of the army.

The final aspect of the study was the affordability of the proposed size and organization of the army. This provided a general overview of the financial constraints that may restrict or assist in the expansion of the regular army. The study identified the external financial pressures on the defense budget and the limited increase in this budget

over the past ten years. However the current economic climate and forecast raise the

potential for defense expansion. Any expansion though would need to be considered

across all services. There were no significant outcomes from this study and it highlighted

the need for further research into defense budgeting to support an expansion of the

regular army.

Overall this study has identified that Australia is located within a dynamic

strategic environment with many challenges. These challenges will focus Australia's

attention on the security and stability of the immediate neighborhood. Further this is

probably the area where Australia's next major army deployment will occur. To satisfy

the demands of the next major deployment and the other missions in the national strategy

the army will need to expand its current regular combat organization from approximately

13,000 to 20,000 personnel. This expansion is likely to occur in a financially static

environment. The reality of all this is that INTERFET operations in East Timor and

Defence 2000 have highlighted the need for a larger regular army to support the national

and strategic demands of the Asia Pacific region.

<u>Suggestions for Further Research</u>

This thesis has identified a number of internal research issues that have not been

fully covered. These issues range from the organization of tactical units to the detailed

strategic level budgeting to maintain the proposed force. These studies would serve to

round out the organization of the Australian Army.

Many of these additional research issues relate to the organization of tactical army

units to meet the demands of the strategic environment. Three types of units need to be

reviewed. The first is the role, tasks, and organization of reconnaissance forces within

the division and brigades. Currently the army does not posses these types of units and they are essential in the strategic environment. The second is the formation and concept of operations for an air defense brigade in defense of power projection bases while retaining a tactical support capability. This is a significant advancement on Australia's current air defense capability and one that is essential to the national strategy's primary mission. The final organizational research topic is the formation of a logistic force to support independent brigades and provide theater level support simultaneously. This research will aid the development of well-integrated logistic support within the current strategic framework.

Another area the study did not cover adequately is the role of the army reserve and the organization of the enabling forces within the Australian Army. The army reserve is an essential support component to the proposed regular army organization. The research would need to cover legislative, training and organizational issues and should support the current operational framework. An additional investigation into the size and organization of the enabling force is warranted, for this force is at the core of raising, training and sustaining the army.

At the strategic level there are two broad areas of additional study. The first is the roles and tasks of the other services in supporting the proposed regular army organization. The other is a detailed analysis of the defense budget to confirm the viability of expanding the regular army to meet the goals of the national security strategy while fulfilling modernization goals over the next ten years. Both of these topics will provide some important indicators on the viability of the proposed organization.

This research by no means completes this subject, but goes some way to plotting a course in uncertain times. The Australian Army is a central component of the national security strategy. It should be effectively prepared to meet the demands of the strategic environment.

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