



**Australian Army  
Research Centre**



# **Resetting the Australian Army**

## **Negotiating the 2023 Defence Strategic Review**

**Dr Albert Palazzo**

**Australian Army Occasional Paper No. 16**





**Australian Army  
Research Centre**

---

# **Resetting the Australian Army**

## **Negotiating the 2023 Defence Strategic Review**

**Australian Army Occasional Paper No. 16**

© Commonwealth of Australia 2023

This publication is copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of study, research, criticism or review (as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*), and with standard source credits included, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Australian Army, the Department of Defence or the Australian Government.

ISSN (Online) 2653-0406

ISSN (Print) 2653-0414

All enquiries regarding this publication should be forwarded to the Director of the Australian Army Research Centre.

To learn about the work of the Australian Army Research Centre visit [researchcentre.army.gov.au](https://researchcentre.army.gov.au).

---

# Contents

Introduction	1
Government Direction for the 2023 DSR	3
Key DSR Outcomes for the Army	6
The 1923 Washington Naval Treaty Reorganisation	12
The 1957 Forward Defence Reorganisation	17
The Post-Vietnam Reorganisation	22
Army Reorganisations during the Defence of Australia Era	25
Observations and Conclusion	28
Biography	32
Endnotes	33



---

## Introduction

On 24 April 2023 the Australian Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, and the Minister for Defence, Richard Marles, announced the release of the government's much anticipated 'National Defence: Defence Strategic Review' (DSR), the unclassified version. The government had initiated the review the previous August, appointing a former Chief of Defence Force, Sir Angus Houston, and a former Minister for Defence, Stephen Smith, to lead its preparation.<sup>1</sup> Houston and Smith delivered the report in February, which allowed time for the government's reflection and judgement.<sup>2</sup>

The DSR's release was met with numerous claims of its great import, including calling it a 'major shake-up', a 'landmark study' and the 'greatest shifts in Australia's military since WWII'.<sup>3</sup> Marles described it as a 'huge moment in Australian defence history'.<sup>4</sup> The reality is somewhat more prosaic. Australia has a long history of defence reviews, dating back to 1877 in the colonial period, when Colonel William Jervois arrived from England to conduct the first one. The DSR itself admits that since the Second World War 'there have been innumerable strategic papers, defence reviews and white papers'.<sup>5</sup> Australia has also faced testing times in the past, such as on the eves of the world wars and throughout the Cold War. Australia's strategic situation has changed before, and done so with some frequency—for example, when Japan made the transition from enemy to ally. In the realm of national security, change is the norm and a state's leaders must undertake periodic reassessments of the threats their country faces and make modifications to defence policy to meet evolving requirements.

The primary audience for this paper is the members of the Australian Army, although those serving in the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), as well as the general public, should also find it informative. Notably, the paper will avoid Defence's cyber and information capabilities because most of their attributes are not in the public domain.

The paper will begin by identifying the key aspects of the review and their import for the Army. It will highlight that the DSR's overall message is a positive one, at least for the land force. To reinforce its conclusions, the paper will consider a number of historical reviews to illustrate how the Army has responded to the government's directed defence policy reassessments in the past. In doing so, the paper makes the observation that the present DSR is simply the Australian Government's latest reassessment of the strategic environment.<sup>6</sup> The prior reviews the paper will examine are:

- the 1923 Washington Naval Treaty reorganisation
- the 1957 forward defence reorganisation
- the post-Vietnam War reorganisation
- the Army in the era of the Defence of Australia policy.

The paper will highlight the effect these reviews had on the structure and capability of the Army. The other services will not be ignored, however, since in each of the historical reviews the RAN and the RAAF received a higher priority from the government. The current review is different; each of the services will have important roles to play in an integrated force. Commentary claiming that the DSR is a 'kick in the guts for the Army' is manifestly untrue and unhelpful. The Army will need to change, but in doing so there will be opportunity to serve the nation more effectively in accordance with government policy.<sup>7</sup>



---

## Government Direction for the 2023 DSR

The government gave Houston and Smith a number of instructions for the preparation of the DSR. The authors were to outline the future strategic challenges to Australia that might require an operational response from the Australian Defence Force (ADF), identify the investments needed to achieve the necessary force posture, and, most importantly, ‘consider all elements of the Integrated Investment Program and provide recommendations for its reprioritisation’.<sup>8</sup>

In authorising the DSR, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese highlighted the need for Australia to respond to a ‘changing regional and global strategic environment’ in order to ensure that ‘Defence’s capability and structure is fit for purpose and delivers the greatest return on investment’.<sup>9</sup> The cause of this change is an increasingly assertive China and its seeming intention to challenge the dominance of the United States in the Indo-Pacific region, as well as the liberal-led rules-based order. China is in the midst of a major military build-up and gaining the ability to project power into the Indo-Pacific, including Australia’s near neighbourhood as the 2022 China–Solomon Islands security pact attests.<sup>10</sup> The uni-polar moment is over, the report’s authors acknowledge, and competition between the United States and China is the defining political feature of our time, including the prospect for great power war. The review’s goal, according to Albanese, was to position the ADF to meet the security challenges of the next decade and beyond.<sup>11</sup>

There is also a secondary rationale for undertaking this review at this time—money, a common feature of most defence reassessments. When the government authorised the DSR, the forward estimates were already over-programmed by 24 per cent for capability acquisition. This represented a commitment of \$42 billion out to 2033 for which no money had been allocated. As the DSR notes, this included \$32.2 billion for the Guided Weapons and Explosive Ordnance Enterprise. The Albanese Government's commitment to obtain nuclear-powered submarines, at a cost estimated at between \$268 billion and \$368 billion over the next three decades, is expected to add to the pressure on the defence budget. To reduce this pressure, the government asked Houston and Smith to reprioritise future acquisitions with an eye to eliminating some programs or reducing their size.<sup>12</sup>

The DSR shares a number of continuities with previous defence reviews, almost as if they are all part of an Australian defence review tradition. Most notable is the mandatory statement that Australian territory is not at risk of invasion. The current DSR states that 'there is at present only a remote possibility of any power contemplating an invasion of our continent'.<sup>13</sup> Historically, without exception, Australia has gone to war to protect its interests, not its territory. This means that if war eventuates, the ADF will likely deploy forward in order to interdict the enemy as far from Australia's shores as possible, as well as close to wherever its interests may lie.

Like the authors of previous reviews, the authors of the DSR employ sweeping language and exhortations to make their points, but avoid specifics and detail. The absence of specificity is an advantage for each service; they have wide scope for interpretation on how they go about meeting the government's intent. More troubling is the absence of funding for many of the DSR's recommendations. Presumably the money will be found by current and future governments, since without funds the DSR is simply an aspiration whose goals will remain unfulfilled. The Army must act on the assumption that appropriate funding will appear in good time.

The report's lack of recommendations for the acquisition of uncrewed aerial systems (UAS) and counter-UAS systems is also disappointing. Their widespread employment in Afghanistan and the Russo-Ukraine War more than suggests the need for the ADF to increase its UAS and counter-UAS capabilities.



**An Australian soldier alongside an Uncrewed Aerial System manned  
(source: Defence Image: 20230511army8514423\_0929 UAS)**

There is one further broad observation worthy of note in the DSR. For the first time a defence strategic document includes more than just a passing reference to climate change. This one includes a standalone chapter on what climate change means for defence, albeit largely from the perspective of disaster relief. By contrast, the preceding 2020 Defence Strategic Review contained only the briefest and most anodyne mention of the subject.<sup>14</sup> What this suggests is that the time for the ADF to include climate change in infrastructure planning and capability development has arrived.<sup>15</sup>

---

## Key DSR Outcomes for the Army

The DSR gives the Army four priorities to address. They are:

1. developing a littoral manoeuvre capability by sea, land and air
2. developing long-range fires, including a land-based maritime strike capability
3. providing for an air and missile defence capability
4. maintaining close-combat capabilities, including a single armoured combined-arms brigade, able to meet the most demanding land challenges in our region.<sup>16</sup>

In addition, the Army Reserve has been given a primary task of providing area security across the northern Australia base network, as well as serving an expansion base and follow-on force.<sup>17</sup>

The implications of this list of priorities are quite significant and should result in a remake of how the Army thinks about, prepares for and wages war. The key outcomes demanded by the DSR fall into two areas: capability acquisition and force posture. As this paper's survey of earlier reviews will soon make clear, the Army has only ever had two kinds of responses to the similar demands made by earlier defence reviews: (1) maintain the force's structure to facilitate expansion to wage major land war or (2) preserve a degree of capability in order to provide the government with a small, but readily deployable, contingency force.

Usually, the Army undertook a mixture of both. It maintained a largely hollow but broad-based structure, while sustaining a few units at a higher level of readiness in case an urgent call for military force eventuated. For example, when the government committed combat troops to the Vietnam War it was

only possible to deploy a battalion group—1 Royal Australian Regiment (1RAR). In Vietnam, the battalion served as a part of the US 173 Airborne Brigade (Separate), from which it obtained most of its support. The following year, as force expansion proceeded, Australia sent more troops and the Vietnam commitment gradually expanded to its maximum of a brigade-sized task force containing three infantry battalions and supporting arms.<sup>18</sup>

Unsurprisingly, in the case of the current DSR the Army is being asked to provide both a capability response force and a structure for expansion. It must raise and train the units that will undertake long-range fires; master air and missile defence; and maintain a force suitable for combined arms warfare at the formation level. It must also organise its reserve elements so that they have a structure suitable for the generation of a larger force—such as raising a third division or more—or being capable of acting as a follow-on force.<sup>19</sup>

The DSR's priorities introduce a novel element to the history of the Army's reactions to reviews, however. In addition to the two traditional focuses on structure and capability, the Army will need to address a third and hitherto unexplored response—perception of self. The implementation of mandated reorganisations that followed previous reviews did not change the Army in a fundamental way. The Army modified its structure, as when it adopted the pentropic division; or introduced a new capability, as when 3RAR became a parachute battalion. But the Army's perception of itself remained consistent and unaffected. The Australian Army has always understood itself to be the embodiment of light infantry. This time, as a result of the DSR, the Army must let go of this perception. As I have written elsewhere, the future Army will belong to the gunner, or in this case, a gunner who fires missiles.<sup>20</sup> The infantry and other trades will still be critical, but it will be the gunner, supported by a sensor targeting system, who enables the rest of the force to achieve its mission. In addition, it is more than clear that the government wants a land force that is capable of distant strike. In fact, after the nuclear-powered submarines, a missile-based strike capability is the second most important demand in the review.

The Army, therefore, will need to rethink how it fights or perhaps what it considers a fight to look like.<sup>21</sup> While closing with and defeating an opponent, and needing to secure and hold ground will remain an essential feature of future war, winning the long-range fight will be a prerequisite.

Missiles will allow the Army to project power over vast distances and even to contest sea and air control. When a land-based missile battery targets, hits and sinks a warship it will inflict more than just local damage; it could possibly deny the enemy the ability to achieve its objective, without any need to close with them. The Army will be able to dispatch considerable kinetic effect across a vast operational theatre that will more than just complicate an adversary's actions; the Army's lethality may prevent the enemy from acting at all, or only with an unacceptable number of casualties.<sup>22</sup> The force's acquisition of missiles and the elevation of the status of the gunner necessitates the force to rethink how it prioritises, synchronises and conducts combat. The end point of this process will generate a cultural shake-up in the force's status hierarchy that will see the gunner move to the fore.

The DSR's authors fulfilled the government's request to reconsider the Integrated Investment Plan. Their decisions affect a number of programs that the Army had considered crucial to its war-fighting capability. These include the cancellation of the second regiment of self-propelled howitzers (Land 8116, Phase 2) and the reduction of the infantry fighting vehicle buy from 430 to 129 (Land 400, Phase 3). Conversely, the Army secured some important gains, including the acceleration and expansion of two missile programs: Land 8113, Phases 2 to 4; and Land 4100, Phase 2. In addition, Defence has been told to accelerate and expand the replacement watercraft programs, both medium and heavy (Land 8710, Phases 1 and 2) in order to improve the force's littoral manoeuvre capability.<sup>23</sup> While some soldiers will feel hard done by, overall the DSR is a validation of the Army and its purpose. The government's commitment to infantry fighting vehicles is a win even with reduced numbers, because once the assembly line commences production, the opportunity to expand the fleet exists, much as was the case for the Bushmaster. Regarding the howitzer, while every soldier appreciates the extra firepower of more guns, the reality is that the longer-range missiles are the better option.



**Assault barges at beachhead, Balikpapan, Borneo, 1 July 1945**  
(source: AWM image 132509)

While it is always kit that gets a soldier's heart racing, it is in the more prosaic area of force posture that the really important outcomes are to be found in the DSR. As the review's priorities illustrate, the government wants the Army to remake itself into a littoral manoeuvre force. Structurally, this requires the re-rolling of the existing combat brigades as well as the positioning of certain, as yet unidentified, capabilities in northern Australia. More significantly, the Army is being given clear responsibilities that sit at the core of the nation's defence posture. As will be discussed below, unlike in the interwar and 'Defence of Australia' periods, the government is not marginalising the Army to a small anti-raid afterthought. The mandate to transform the Army into a littoral manoeuvre force with enhanced long-range fires puts it on equal footing with the RAN and the RAAF in the ADF's hierarchy.<sup>24</sup>

In a similar way, the DSR's strong endorsement of the Guided Weapons and Explosive Ordnance Enterprise is an indirect win for Army. Missile launchers need missiles to launch, and having a sovereign production capability will help make that a reality. In peacetime, budget managers conveniently minimise the number of war stocks held. When war comes, ammunition is expended at higher rates than anticipated, leading to a constraint on supply; such was the case in the 1915 shell crisis of the First World War and with the shortage of missiles in the present Russo-Ukraine War. Having a sovereign manufacturing capability will allow ordnance manufacturers to provide the land force with a continuous supply of missiles rather than having to depend on a readily interdictable and divertible global supply chain.<sup>25</sup>

The DSR's call to make the ADF into an integrated force is another indirect win for the land force. As I have argued elsewhere, the increasing range and accuracy of modern long-range strike weapons means that the domains of war are collapsing.<sup>26</sup> Each domain now has the ability to strike deep into other domains, and efforts to draw distinctions between the land, sea and air (as well as cyber and information) domains are becoming increasing pointless. The goal for Australia is to create an integrated targeting system that allows a RAAF platform to identify a hostile warship and see it destroyed by a land-based missile battery—or even a battery mounted in an Army littoral manoeuvre vessel—or equally by a warship, a submarine or a plane.<sup>27</sup> As the Army's missile capability improves there is every likelihood that the land force becomes the primary means by which Australia fights for control of the sea and the air. After all, this is what China plans: the Chinese fleet will fight supported and protected by a well-developed shore-based missile system that overwatches its adjoining seas.<sup>28</sup> What Australia is missing is a networked system with which to integrate sensors with shooters, immaterial to which service they belong. Hopefully the Department of Defence has a program underway for the development of a low-earth orbit satellite constellation with which to create the essential integrated network.<sup>29</sup>





**A Tactical Air Defence Radar System operates at an airfield in the Northern Territory (source: Defence image: 20220603raaf8659002\_0026)**

Some soldiers may choose to focus on the cuts outlined in the DSR and the reallocation of a part of the Army's budget to other requirements. This would be short-sighted and a miscalculation of the opportunities contained within the review. The budget losses will likely prove temporary and there are significant gains to offset the losses. On balance the review is a clear win for the Army, as long as its members grasp the opportunity offered. In fact, the DSR is one of the most favourable defence reviews for the Army for a long time, arguably since before the onset of the era of forward defence. The RAAF is the service least affected by the DSR but only because it is already so well equipped. It is not possible to assess how space and cyber organisations have fared in the review because so few of their capabilities are in the public domain.

The paper will now turn to the historic Army reorganisations. This discussion will help to establish how the land force responded in the past, in order to help guide future decisions.

---

## **The 1923 Washington Naval Treaty Reorganisation**

In January 1920, the Minister for Defence, George Pearce, entrusted the design of the post-First World War Army to a committee of senior officers chaired by Lieutenant General Sir Harry G Chauvel. They concluded that Australia needed an army of 180,000 soldiers, a force of sufficient size to deter Japan—the only identified enemy—or prevent a decisive defeat following an invasion. Australia only had to hold on until, it was argued, the Royal Navy arrived and defeated the Japanese navy.

A force of this size would generate five infantry and three cavalry divisions, similar to what Australia fielded in the First World War. However, while the scheme provided the structure, it did not provide for an army that could fight on its own. It lacked the divisional/corps support and service troops to sustain the force in the field, and many essential line-of-communication units were notional. In addition, the senior officers recommended maintaining the divisions not on their war strengths but at a reduced figure—respectively 67 per cent and 87 per cent of establishment for cavalry and infantry divisions. Thus the standing Army structure was more of a framework than a force capable of immediate action upon callout. To be capable of taking the field it would need to first expand, or rely on a great power for much of its support.<sup>30</sup>



**Lieutenant General Harry Chauvel, Commander Desert Mounted Corps**  
(source: AWM image B01484)

However, the cost of the senior officers' recommendations exceeded the government's financial expectations. The funding gap saw a reduction in the size of the force's establishment and the number of days soldiers spent in training. Even with this further reduction, events soon showed that this minimal, undertrained force would be the high point of the interwar Army. Following the signing of the Washington Naval Treaty in 1922—which set tonnage limits on great power fleets, including Japan's—the government deemed the Army wholly unnecessary for the nation's defence and ruthlessly reduced its size and training still further. The government decided that the basis of the nation's protection was in naval hands, both the Royal Navy and the Royal Australian Navy.

No time was lost in making cuts to the defence budget. The Army retained its structure, but on an even more skeletal basis. The strength of the Citizen Military Forces plunged from 118,000 to just 31,000 which meant that the Army would keep its divisions at just 25 per cent of strength. The training obligation was similarly reduced, to just six days a year. The Army responded by encouraging its soldiers to form rifle clubs in order to keep up their musketry. The Permanent Military Forces that made up the Army's staff and garrisoned the coastal forts contracted by approximately 35 per cent. The Army retained its divisional and brigade formations and technically had 15 infantry, six cavalry and 17 field brigades on its books, but all were paper structures without capability.<sup>31</sup>

The government accepted that the basis of Australia's security was the so-called Singapore Strategy. Specifically, in case of war with Japan the Royal Navy would sail east from its home bases in the United Kingdom to its fleet base at Singapore, from which it would sail to defeat the enemy, thereby safeguarding Australia. As a result, the Army's task was to defeat raiders put ashore from enemy cruisers and the wrecks of the ships the Navy had sunk. While this was a legitimate request by government, the Army's leaders never accepted the mission because it believed, with some prescience, that the Japanese would strike when Britain was distracted in its home waters by a nearby threat. Consequently, despite periodic government entreaties, the Army continued to pursue its own path and maintained a divisional and brigade structure primed for expansion in a major war, not simply to round up small parties of raiders.

The government did not give up. In 1932 the Prime Minister, Joseph Lyons, made a concerted effort to get the Army to remake itself for the desired anti-raid mission. Lyons defined the land force's role as supplementary to sea power and directed it to organise 'military forces sufficient to deal with landing parties where such operations are feasible'.<sup>32</sup> In addition, the Army was to staff the coastal forts in order to secure vital locations, and have the ability to raise one division for service overseas for imperial defence.

The Army was required to identify the units that would respond to raiders. The government termed this the First Line Component. The Army moved with studied torpor to allocate such units and it was not until 1937 that the Chief of the General Staff, Major General John Lavarack, submitted a list to the government. However, it proved accidentally on purpose less usable than the government desired. Lavarack strongly opposed the anti-raid mission, believing instead that the Army's purpose was to defeat an invasion and therefore it required a structure more suited for rapid expansion in case of war. The list he submitted to the government was far longer than what was needed to counter a raid and was, in fact, designed to mobilise the administrative, support and training units needed for the force's expansion.<sup>33</sup>

Throughout the interwar period, the Army's stubborn focus was on defending the continued existence of a divisional force structure that was capable of expansion if war again eventuated. The Army's leaders expected Japan to be that enemy and that the Singapore Strategy would fail. They deliberately undermined the government's direction to make the anti-raid mission their priority. While the Army's insubordination represented a failure of the civil-military relationship, it was ultimately providential. It is also worth noting that the government's failure to get what it demanded from the Army was only possible because the land force was considered of such low priority that what the soldiers did never really mattered. A larger and more relevant Army could not have flown under the government's radar in such a way.

The interwar years were dismal ones for the Army. It was undervalued by its political masters, was starved of funds and occupied a distant second place to the Navy in the nation's security hierarchy. Its structure was hollow and its capability generation minimal. The best that can be said of the Army at the time is that it survived sufficiently well to be ready for regeneration when the time came. When war came in 1939, the Army stood up the Second Australian Imperial Force for overseas service. When Japan entered the war and after the failure of the Singapore Strategy, Australia turned to the United States for its protection, not Britain.

For today's Army, the key takeaway is that a dismissive, uninterested government is fatal. The Army struggled to survive because the government did not believe the land force was critical to the nation's defence. Moreover, the Army's insubordination neither garnered the rebuke it deserved nor obtained more resources with which to build up the force. The Army and the government were acting at cross-purposes, neither meeting their responsibilities. That the Army's leaders insisted on maintaining a multi-divisional expansion base, rather than fielding a smaller organisation that the budget could support, meant that in the end the land force had neither structure nor capability. Not having a role is not the case with the DSR—the land force matters, as the review makes clear.



**Advancing through typical jungle, Milne Bay, 1 October 1942**  
(source: AWM image 013317)

---

## The 1957 Forward Defence Reorganisation

In 1956 the Australian Prime Minister, Robert Menzies, made two demands of the Australian Army—he wanted it to offer the government more capability but at a lower cost, which to the contemporary soldier may sound like a familiar refrain. The government outlined its interpretation of the strategic environment in the 1956 Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy paper, which pointedly highlighted a number of Communist-led threats against which it expected the Army to provide a credible counter. The Strategic Basis paper considered both the potential global war between the United States and the Soviet Union, and more limited conflicts in South-East Asia. The Army was to provide forces for both contingencies, particularly in relation to the defence of Malaya and the north-west approaches to Australia. The Strategic Basis paper required that:

- a. Immediately available there should be highly trained and mobile regular forces both for cold war tasks and for rapid deployment in the initial stages of limited war (or global war should it occur) in South East Asia.
- b. Subsequently additional forces may be required either to follow up those forces initially deployed or for the defence of the northwest approaches to Australia in the event that South East Asia is lost.<sup>34</sup>

In 1955, the Australian Regular Army had an establishment of just 23,000 soldiers, whereas the Citizen Military Forces—the nation's part-time conscripted militia—numbered over 85,000. The regular force, from which the Army would draw its crisis response contingent, was heavily committed at this time. It had to staff the Army's regional headquarters (the former Commands and Military Districts), form the field force, garrison the fixed defences, and make up the support and maintenance structure. In addition,

in late 1955 the government decided to deploy a battalion group of 1,500 regulars to Malaya as a part of Australia's commitment to the Far East Strategic Reserve.<sup>35</sup> However, the most significant resource-consuming task facing the Australian Regular Army was the training of the national service troops that made up much of the Citizen Military Forces, which represented the land force's expansion base. So serious was the Australian Regular Army's situation that the defence scholar TB Millar quipped that the Army 'had so much tail that the dog was scarcely visible'.<sup>36</sup>

Thus, the Australian Regular Army was overextended and unable to meet the government's contingency needs. To free up soldiers to be available for a limited war response in South-East Asia necessitated a reallocation of personnel and responsibilities. This was the primary objective of the 1957 reorganisation.

In May 1957 the Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant General Harry Wells, observed that the Australian Regular Army's commitment to the training of national servicemen and units of the Citizen Military Forces left too few full-time soldiers for more urgent tasks. With the government's authorisation, Wells proposed the following rationalisation:

- A battle group for service in Malaya with the Far East Strategic Reserve
- A regular force of up to one division available for operations within three months
- A Citizen Military Forces composed of three divisions on a reduced scale (66 per cent of war establishment) as an expansion base.<sup>37</sup>

After some discussion and modification, the plan received the government's assent. Addressing the issue in Parliament, Menzies explained that what the government needed was a well-equipped and readily available regular brigade group, the same request that is made again in the current DSR. Working against this goal was the Australian Regular Army's obligation to train the Citizen Military Forces, which reduced the number of soldiers available for immediate use. Moreover, to make sure no-one missed the reform's intent, Cabinet ordered that the building up and equipping of the regular brigade was to have absolute priority. As a consequence, the Citizen Military Forces would see some support units disbanded and its establishment reduced to 51,000. In addition, the annual intake of national servicemen was cut to 12,000, one-third of previous years.<sup>38</sup>



However, the reduction in the training obligation still did not provide enough soldiers to fill the Australian Regular Army's units. The Army's solution, which it brought to government, was to redirect some conscripts from the national service scheme to serve in the regular force. While this solution could give the government the capability it wanted, it saw the political cost as too high. To pursue it would require a change to the Defence Act in order to mandate overseas service by conscripts—only regulars had this obligation. In 1959, instead of amending the Defence Act, the government chose to end conscription.<sup>39</sup>

Even before the Army completed the reorganisation it became clear that it could not meet the government's requirements. The Australian Regular Army still had too many responsibilities and not enough soldiers with which to meet them. A 1957 study undertaken by the Adjutant-General determined that the only way to fill the regular brigade group would be to cull the land force's other units of their suitable men. To do so, however, would bring the command, support and training functions to the point of collapse. The study also showed the government's reluctance to increase the establishment of the regular force so that there were enough troops to meet an operational requirement as well as to support its maintenance, sustainment and administrative functions. The Army had exhausted the limits of what could be achieved by doing more with less. This intractable problem—structure versus capability—in an environment in which the government demanded both but was unwilling to provide the necessary funds was the origin of the Army's most radical and ultimately ill-conceived reorganisation: the pentropic experiment.

The idea for what became known as the Australian pentropic division came from the US Army. The Americans were experimenting with a five-sided formation that it called the pentomic division, with the goal of enabling dispersed operations on a nuclear battlefield. Like the American variant, the Australian pentropic division contained five oversized manoeuvre battalions rather than three brigades.<sup>40</sup> Ironically, before Australia began its transition to the five-sided organisation, the US gave up on it and reverted to the three-sided division.

The pentropic division's five infantry battalions had 50 per cent more soldiers than a regular battalion. Each battalion contained five infantry companies, plus administrative and support companies. For support, the division had five field regiments and five field squadrons, although the Australian Army could only manage three squadrons of tanks. With supporting arms attached, the infantry battalion became a battle group, and the term for two or more

battle groups was a task force. The division was meant to have an armoured personnel regiment that was capable of lifting an infantry battalion but at the time of the reorganisation the requisite vehicles were not in service and the regiment was a paper formation. The Army formed two pentropic divisions. The 1st Division consisted of two regular and three militia battalions, and the 3rd Division which had five militia battalions.<sup>41</sup>

In 1960 the Army began the switch to the pentropic structure. For the Australian Regular Army the change involved largely a reallocation of personnel which saw soldiers culled from support and administrative roles. The goal was to have by January 1962 one regular battle group on 14 days notice to move and the entire regular task force ready to move within 30 days of notification.<sup>42</sup>

In contrast to the ease of the regular force's adoption of pentropic, the reorganisation of the Citizen Military Forces was a traumatic experience for those involved. With the end of national service in 1959 membership in the part-time force crashed. By 1960 there were just 38,000 soldiers in the Citizen Military Forces and it was well below establishment. Many units had so few members as to be unviable and the larger pentropic battalions saw many of the force's units disbanded, as well as the loss of traditional titles. The force went from 30 community-based battalions to just nine state-based ones.<sup>43</sup> There was much anger at the time within the militia community, largely aimed at the regular army, but the strategic environment made it clear that the reorganisation was necessary.<sup>44</sup>

The pentropic experiment would prove short-lived, however. In 1962 the government accepted that the strategic situation the country faced had deteriorated and that Australia needed to increase its military capability. To do more, the Army actually needed more. Communist pressure had increased in South-East Asia and tension with Indonesia had grown worse. The government once again put the priority on readily available regular forces with expansion to follow, depending on need.<sup>45</sup> Another strategic review the following year reiterated the deterioration in Australia's security environment.<sup>46</sup>

In response, the Menzies government did increase the Army's budget, which allowed it to raise a third pentropic battalion. Yet Australia faced multiple threats and had numerous obligations in Malaya and as a part of the South-East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) for which it possessed too few regular battalions with which to respond. A short-term fix was to commit a unit to multiple contingences. For example, the battalion in Malaya was

a part of the Far East Strategic Reserve but also designated for support to Laos, as well as serving as Australia's contribution to SEATO.

The Australian Government required greater strategic flexibility, which a small land force organised on a pentropic basis was unable to provide. In addition, the organisation had operating problems, such as a command span that was too great for a battalion commander and the absence of an intermediate headquarters—the brigade—between the battalion and the division commander. That pentropic was also incompatible with Australia's allies was fatal to its future. Lieutenant General John Wilton, who had never been a fan of the division, moved to kill it off soon after becoming Chief of the General Staff in January 1963.

The 1957 reorganisation and the pentropic experiment are examples of personnel magic-making. If the Army could wish hard enough it might be able to find more soldiers, but instead the force kept trying to squeeze more out of the organisation by accepting risk in reduced establishments and the expansion base. Unfortunately, the Army's establishment issues have proven an intractable problem which continues to bedevil capability development. This is one of the weaknesses of the DSR. Its chapter on the Defence workforce admits to 'significant workforce challenges' but proposes no concrete suggestions, other than the need for an 'innovative and bold approach to recruitment and retention'.<sup>47</sup> As this section makes clear, workplace shortfall is a chronic problem for the Army, and if capability is to result more soldiers are required. Hopefully, as the Army transitions to a littoral-capable field force it will use the opportunity to obtain the establishment it requires, so that true capability exists.

The failure of the pentropic division is also worthy of comment. The Army's error was going ahead with the reform after it became apparent that the Americans were about to abandon their own experiment. Being a small force dependent on a great power ally, the Australian Army needs to be capable of working with a larger power. In such cases organisation matters and being the odd force makes operating as a junior partner in a coalition more difficult. When Australia committed troops to Vietnam, it did so in units which were similar in structure to the American ones and which possessed equivalent capabilities. Therefore, as the Army becomes a littoral force it needs to make sure that it does not adopt structures or doctrines that are incompatible with coalition operations. In fact, the move to a littoral force offers the opportunity to build a force that enhances alliance interoperability.

---

## The Post-Vietnam Reorganisation

Australia's Vietnam adventure commenced in 1962 with the commitment of a small party of advisors and ended in 1972 with the withdrawal of the last advisors. In between, the strength of the Australian contingent peaked at approximately 8,300. To meet and sustain its requirements, the government expanded the Army, adding three battalions. In 1964 it also reinstated national service. In another change, the latest conscription scheme included a mandate that those selected could serve overseas in units of the Australian Regular Army or at home in the Citizen Military Forces. The result would see national servicemen providing the necessary numbers to fill out the Army's regular units and thereby averting hollowness across the deployment.

Unsurprisingly, the end of the war saw the need for another reorganisation. In early December 1972 the new government of Gough Whitlam quickly moved to fulfil its election promises. It ordered all troops remaining in Vietnam home, not a terribly significant act since only a few remained. More importantly, it suspended liability for service under the national service scheme and allowed those serving to seek their immediate discharge. The result was another collapse in the establishment of the Australian Regular Army and the Citizen Military Forces.<sup>48</sup>

From his swearing in, Whitlam made it clear that he was less interested in Defence than his predecessors, publicly stating that his government 'will be less militarily orientated'.<sup>49</sup> This attitude took shape in the reduction of the defence budget as a share of gross domestic product and the cancellation of equipment projects.<sup>50</sup> The main factor, however, was a change in Australia's security policy. The Menzies-era concept of forward

defence came to an end and Whitlam replaced it with a focus on continental defence, although a formal policy was not articulated until the release of the 1987 Defence White Paper known as 'The Defence of Australia'.<sup>51</sup>

The reorganisation of the Army after Vietnam took place in a climate of government uninterest and in the absence of a unifying understanding of what it needed to prepare against. The initial proposal by the Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant General Francis Hassett, called for the retention of the existing nine regular battalions, but at a reduced scale. Three of the battalions would have 600 soldiers, one 500, one 375 and the remaining four—little more than cadres—200 each. He also wanted to retain a regular division and proposed that the Army would maintain most other regular units on a cadre basis as necessary. The proposal made no provision for the Citizen Military Forces.<sup>52</sup>

This proposal did not find favour with the government because of its clear intent to create a regular force that acted as an expansion base: the job of the Citizen Military Forces. Australia had no need for two entities whose primary role was expansion. Instead, the Australian Regular Army had to merge six of its battalions, organised into a division consisting of three two-battalion task forces (later brigades).<sup>53</sup> This restructure created battalions with larger establishments, making them notionally more ready for contingency employment. The Australian Regular Army's reorganisation proved fairly straightforward. The really significant changes were to the Citizen Military Forces—namely the Millar Reform.

In 1973, the Minister for Defence, Lance Barnard, asked the academic TB Millar to conduct a study of the Citizen Military Forces. His sweeping assessment of Australia's part-time soldier organisation would result in its abolishment.<sup>54</sup> The end point would see the Citizen Military Forces become the Army Reserve, whose purpose was no longer to act as an expansion base but solely to support the regular force.

The Citizen Military Forces had been suffering from low enlistments for some time, a problem that periodic enactments and dissolutions of national service schemes did not solve. By 1970, the militia's numbers had fallen to about 50 per cent of strength, at fewer than 32,000 personnel. Whitlam's ending of national service in 1972 drove the number even lower. As Millar began his study, few formations or units of the Citizen Military Forces were

at 50 per cent of establishment. Millar set the minimum for a unit's survival at 70 per cent. Units that did not meet this requirement would be disbanded or amalgamated. The result was the wholesale closure of over 240 formations and units across Australia.

The parts of the Citizen Military Forces that suffered the most were the elements making up the support and line-of-communication units. Logistics has always been underappreciated by the Australian military. Instead of providing for its own support, Australia tends to rely on the logistic system of its great power partner, as was the case in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan. The consequence is that, if called upon to undertake an independent operation, the ADF has neither the depth of support nor the experience to sustain a major campaign. However, if the ADF is to operate in the littoral it will need greater self-reliance in logistics. This overlooked aspect of force generation and projection will need greater attention in the future than was the case during the reforms of the post-Vietnam era.

With the demise of the Citizen Military Forces, both capability generation and force expansion became the responsibility of the Australian Regular Army. But as the Defence of Australia era beckoned, the role of the Army in the nation's security did not look promising. Reform had eliminated the tension that existed between the full- and part-time soldiers but it also left the force more focused on capability generation than expansion. More significantly, the Army again faced a situation in which it did not have a mission, or least not an important one. This period does illustrate one particularly important lesson. Soldiers may be tempted to resent too much direction from the government, but there is something worse than oversight—being adrift without any direction.

---

## Army Reorganisations during the Defence of Australia Era

During the Defence of Australia era the government's desire for land force capability declined, whereas the RAN and the RAAF again became the main means of providing for the nation's security. In 1976, the Minister for Defence, James Killen, made this explicit. In 'Australian Defence', the white paper published that year, the government confirmed that it would no longer base its security policy on the expectation that its forces would deploy overseas in support of another nation.<sup>55</sup> In fact, the Army's mission gradually retrogressed to that which existed from Federation to the onset of the Second World War—dealing with small numbers of enemy raiders. What 'Australian Defence' required of the Army was a highly mobile land force that was able to operate in the country's north, whereas possessing the ability to operate overseas was a secondary issue.<sup>56</sup> Despite this direction, like their interwar predecessors, the Army's leaders struggled to find the mission satisfactory and of sufficient importance.

Hassett's successor Lieutenant General Donald Dunstan believed instead that the Army needed to retain critical skills if it was to effectively respond to a contingency or lay the foundation for expansion. In 1979, Dunstan proposed to refocus the Army along skill lines. He allocated specialisations as:

- 1st Task Force to focus on mobile operations in conjunction with 1st Armoured Regiment
- 3rd Task Force to focus on light scales and be air-portable and air-mobile
- 6th Task Force to remain a standard infantry formation and focus its training on conventional operations in open country.

Each task force also received a secondary specialisation:

- 1st Task Force to develop a capability for amphibious operations
- 3rd Task Force to operate in jungle conditions
- 6th Task Force to advance its skills in urban warfare and amphibious deployment.<sup>57</sup>

In addition, 3RAR, a unit in the 3rd Task Force, became a parachute battalion. While Dunstan's reform maximised the Army's ability to retain skills needed for force expansion, it did little to prioritise a response to enemy incursions in the north. Neither the government nor the Army did much to address this priority gap.

With the 1986 release of Paul Dibb's 'Review of Australia's Defence Capabilities' the government finally articulated what it meant by continental defence, the policy it had adopted 15 years earlier. Dibb identified the primary land force requirement as the need to respond to low-level threats—principally raids—in the north as well as the protection of infrastructure. While a more substantial threat was possible, Dibb was confident that Australia would receive 10 years warning because no adversary currently had the amphibious power projection capabilities needed to attack.<sup>58</sup> The 'Defence of Australia' white paper, released the next year, built upon the Dibb Report. It demanded that the Army provide a force capable of responding to a range of contingencies across northern Australia, including the protection of national infrastructure and resources. It went on to state that possessing an expansion base was to be a lower priority, although the Army was to maintain the necessary skills. Additionally, the requirements for lesser contingencies were to be met largely by the expansion base. The government wanted mobile troops that were capable of rapid development and able to operate dispersed.<sup>59</sup>

The 'Review of Australia's Defence Capabilities' and 'The Defence of Australia' were clear descriptions of what the government expected of the Army. The message was that the land force now occupied a minor place in the nation's security hierarchy and as a result it fared poorly in the allocation of resources between the services. The 1991 'Force Structure Review', for example, went into great depth to outline the requirements of the RAN and the RAAF. The Army's tasks and needs appear almost as an afterthought.<sup>60</sup> As a consequence, any call on the Army, such as the peacekeeping deployments to Namibia, Somalia and Cambodia, severely strained the force's resources as well as its ability to meet its continental defence obligations.

What no one was to know was that the Army's lean times would soon come to an end. Following the election of the government of John Howard in 1996, another strategic review took place. In 1997 the new government issued 'Australia's Strategic Policy', which signalled the end of continental defence and a renewed commitment to international engagement.<sup>61</sup> In announcing the report's release the Minister for Defence, Ian McLachlan, emphasised the new approach to security policy:

*Australia's strategic interests do not begin and end at our shoreline. It would be a serious mistake to think we could adopt a 'fortress Australia' strategy in the event of a deterioration of regional stability. We cannot be secure in an insecure region.*<sup>62</sup>



With very poor timing, as the Howard Government was embracing a wider view of Australia's strategic priorities, the Army was progressing towards the implementation of the Army 21 reorganisation. This reorganisation came out of the 1996 study 'An Australian Army for the 21st Century', which required the force to move away from large brigades to smaller, highly mobile task forces that were optimised for operations across Australia's north.<sup>63</sup> The Australian Army had resisted the anti-raid mission since the end of the Vietnam War and only now, as the requirement was about to cease, did it move to embrace it. Hugh White, the author of 'The Defence of Australia', wrote in 1998 that 'it could be unpleasant irony if we finally develop an army to support the policy of 1987 just at the time we realised it is the wrong policy'.<sup>64</sup>

Events would soon overtake Army 21 and it would never come into effect. Instead, the Army again deployed overseas as Howard sought to increase Australia's presence in world affairs. In 1999, the ADF intervened in East Timor. The War on Terror followed, committing the ADF to lengthy operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Continental defence soon became a memory as forward defence again became Australia's security policy. 'The Defence of Australia' era demonstrated once again that militaries are not in charge of their destiny—the political class is. The military responds to government priorities. From 1972 to well into the 1990s, the Army did not have much of a role to play, although it strove to maintain essential skills for when it was again needed. But a lack of interest from successive governments also translated into a lack of resources for which no organisation could compensate.

The lesson of these years is that even in poor times, the Army must be able to make the best of a poor situation within the dictates of what the government wants. The difference today is that the DSR is not 'The Defence of Australia', despite similar language that stresses deterrence and denial. Rather than marginalisation, the DSR gives the Army a key role to play in the nation's security. Today the government wants the Army to become a littoral force. While it is now a distant memory, the Army has been one before. Throughout the war in the Pacific against the Japanese, the Army conducted littoral operations. Therefore, the transition that the DSR calls for is not novel; it is a return to when Army troops operated from boats against a hostile shore using the sea as a manoeuvre space to avoid strength and attack weakness. The campaigns of 1942 to 1945 hold lessons for the present Army as it makes the transition from a land force to a littoral force.

---

## Observations and Conclusion

Whether the DSR fulfils the expectations of the Australian Government is yet to be determined. As this study shows, not all past reorganisations have been a success. Right now the publicly available version of the DSR is more of a guiding document. Fulfilment awaits and its achievement depends on two factors. The first is whether—and to what extent and how quickly—the government funds the DSR’s recommendations. The second is the extent to which the services—Navy, Army and Air Force, as well as the nascent elements making up the space and information domains—embrace the principles contained within the review and the tasks assigned to them. The Army is the service with the largest journey to make because not only are capability and structure at stake but also the force’s perception of itself needs to evolve. Becoming a littoral force will be challenging, but the opportunities should far outweigh any preference for the maintenance of the status quo.



**A High Mobility Rocket Artillery System launches rockets at Shoalwater Bay Training Area in Queensland (source: Defence image 20210718adf8443968\_515)**

As the historical reorganisations outlined in this paper demonstrate, there are pitfalls that the Army needs to avoid. Most importantly, it cannot afford to be too proud. War evolves and strategic requirements change. Militaries must change too. The Army should not expect the next few years to be easy ones. The best way to ease the path forward is by hard thinking. When asked what he would do if he had only an hour to save the world, Albert Einstein replied that he would spend 55 minutes defining the problem and only five on finding the solution.<sup>65</sup> The Army should, therefore, increase its investment in developing the minds of its key staff while also seeking the advice of outside experts.

Achieving the opportunities presented by the DSR is a worthy challenge. Military forces must evolve to achieve the advantages of their age. It is simple. If they do not, they lose. The Army will need to modify its doctrine, its training and even the type of individual favoured by recruiters. The Army will also have to establish programs for the acquisition of the subsystems that will be needed to maximise the effect of a capability. An integration network will need to be actively pursued and with haste. Some of the steps will be intellectual, others practical. In no particular order, here are some of the things the Army will need to consider. Undoubtedly there are more.

1. Perhaps the hardest task for the Army is to re-imagine itself as a littoral force. While the gunners and the targeting system operators will be the dominant trades of the future, light infantry will still have a key role. As a littoral force, light troops will need to manoeuvre across the water highways to Australia's north. This will require a force that is capable of manoeuvring in a highly dispersed and rapid manner, seizing ground so that missile batteries can stage forward, to protect them and then shift elsewhere. Combined arms will still be the way in which the Army fights but there will be changes in technique, an entirely natural and necessary progression that must occur in pace with the changing character of war.
2. The most important formation in the Army's establishment will be a fires brigade. To support it the Army should also convert a reserve combat brigade into a reserve fires brigade, thereby creating a specialised expansion base and/or follow-on force for the long-range strike capability. The Army will need more fires depth.

3. The Army must reinterpret the battlefield. For the land force, it is no longer just the land that is in play, but all of the domains of war out to the maximum range of a commander's strike options. A land force commander should have no hesitation in acting against an adversary target in the other domains.
4. To move in the littoral requires range and speed. The Army has a fleet of Chinook CH-47 helicopters, but their potential is limited to the tactical space. Other countries routinely use air-to-air refuelling to extend the range of these craft and thereby achieve a strategic capability too. The Army and the RAAF should work to rectify this omission. Another way to move troops is by aerial insertion by fixed wing aircraft. To realise this capability, the Army should consider the conversion of at least one parachute capable company team. This parachute capability is in addition to what the Special Forces offer.
5. When the littoral manoeuvre ships enter service, the Army must see them as more than just a transport option; they can also be used as a platform for weapons. For example, the Army could use them as a launch pad for containerised missile systems, thereby adding a degree of flexibility to Australia's strike capability.
6. The Army should not limit the expansion ability of the Reserves to the activation of the 2nd Division. A major war will require more troops; the Reserves should be a template for the creation of additional divisions, a third and more if needed.
7. The onset of the COVID pandemic has demonstrated the fragility of Australia's global supply lines. Units are not combat-capable unless they are armed and sustained. Weapons and ordnance are rapidly consumed in war, probably at a rate greater than can be met by overseas suppliers, who may also be trying to meet the demands of other military forces. Australia should accept the need, and the cost, of maintaining higher levels of war stocks than previously, as well as investing in greater domestic production capacity.
8. In order to create an integrated force, the ADF will need to develop an overarching command and control system—one that is linked to pervasive and persistent sensor systems, as well as sensors launched for a specific purpose, even human sensors. A low earth orbit satellite system may prove essential for this task.

9. To operate effectively across the littoral to Australia's north, an enormous theatre of operations, the Army will need to enhance its UAS capabilities. Obviously, a counter-UAS capability is also a requirement.
10. As a littoral manoeuvre force, the Army should prepare for dispersed operations and rapid movement. The occupation of ground should only be for as long as the ground is necessary for the mission. There are neither front lines nor rear areas. Power is generated from the point at which a unit is active, and that point can and should move.
11. The ADF must build more capacity in its logistic elements. This includes a greater depth in stockholdings as well as fielding units capable of undertaking dispersed support across a maritime region.

In the DSR, the government has given the Army the priceless opportunity to become a force optimised for the environment and conditions that it is likely to face in a future war against a peer competitor. In requiring the land force to harmonise its way of war with the concept of littoral manoeuvre, and in highlighting the centrality of long-range strike to future combat, the Army has been given the chance to align its structure and capability with the needs of the nation. Over the past 100-plus years the government's dictates and the Army's reception of such direction have often been at odds. In the case of the DSR, the Army's members should grasp this opening and build a force to dominate the country's approaches and, alongside the RAN and the RAAF, convince an adversary that Australia is too difficult to compel and the price too high.

---

## Biography

**Dr Albert Palazzo** is an Adjunct Professor in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at UNSW-Canberra. Previously, he was the long-serving Director of War Studies in the Australian Army Research Centre, a part of the Future Land Warfare Branch in Army Headquarters. He has published widely on Australian military history as well as the future character of war. Amongst his many books are *The Australian Army: A History of its Organisation*; *The Battle of Crete and Planning to Not Lose: The Australian Army's New Philosophy of War*. His current research focus is on the potential of the Strategic Defensive to serve as the basis of Australia's defence policy. His most recent book was published by the US Army, Army University Press and is titled: *Climate Change and National Security: The Implications for the Military*.

---

## Endnotes

1. 'Defence Strategic Review', Department of Defence, accessed 24 April 2023, <https://www.defence.gov.au/about/reviews-inquiries/defence-strategic-review>.
2. 'Defence Strategic Review handed to government', Department of Defence, 14 February 2023, accessed 24 April 2023, <https://www.minister.defence.gov.au/media-releases/2023-02-14/defence-strategic-review-handed-government>.
3. Amy Remeikis, 'Australia's defence force is expected to get its biggest overhaul in decades. Here's what we know so far', *The Guardian*, 24 April 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/apr/24/australias-defence-force-is-expected-to-get-its-biggest-overhaul-in-decades-heres-what-we-know-so-far>; Richard Wood, 'Landmark defence review to make long-range strike weapons a priority', *9 News*, 24 April 2023, <https://www.9news.com.au/national/defence-strategic-review-release-to-make-long-range-strike-weapons-priority/f390dcd3-f457-4809-9f03-eafd231192a8>; Jake Evans, 'The Defence Strategic Review has triggered one of the greatest shifts in Australia's military since WWII. Here's what will change', *ABC News*, 24 April 2023, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-04-24/defence-strategic-review-key-takeaways/102260364>.
4. Matthew Knott, "'Huge moment": Government prepares to unveil AUKUS plan', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 January 2023, <https://amp.smh.com.au/politics/federal/huge-moment-government-prepares-to-unveil-aukus-plan-20230124-p5ceyh.html>.
5. Australian Government, *National Defence: Defence Strategic Review* (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2023), 17.
6. For an overview of these reviews see Albert Palazzo, *The Australian Army: A History of Its Organisation, 1901–2001* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2001).
7. Matthew Knott, "'Kick in the guts for army": Landmark defence review to create winners and losers', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 April 2023, <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/kick-in-the-guts-for-army-landmark-defence-review-to-create-winners-and-losers-20230423-p5d2mt.html>.
8. *Defence Strategic Review*, 12–13.
9. 'Defence Strategic Review handed to government', Department of Defence.
10. Meg Keen, 'The China-Solomons security deal has been signed—time to move on from megaphone diplomacy', *The Guardian*, 30 April 2022, accessed 10 May 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/apr/30/the-china-solomons-security-deal-has-been-signed-time-to-move-on-from-megaphone-diplomacy>.
11. 'Joint Statement—Defence Strategic Review', Department of Defence, 3 August 2022, accessed 24 April 2023, <https://www.minister.defence.gov.au/statements/2022-08-03/joint-statement-defence-strategic-review>.

12. *Defence Strategic Review*, 95. On the Guided Weapons and Explosive Ordnance Enterprise see 'Guided Weapons and Explosive Ordnance Enterprise', Department of Defence, accessed 26 April 2023, <https://www.defence.gov.au/project/guided-weapons-and-explosive-ordnance-enterprise>. On submarine cost see Daniel Hurst and Julian Borger, 'Aukus: Nuclear submarines deal will cost up to \$360bn', *The Guardian*, 14 March 2023, accessed 24 June 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/mar/14/aukus-nuclear-submarines-australia-commits-substantial-funds-into-expanding-us-shipbuilding-capacity>.
13. *Ibid.*, 25.
14. Department of Defence, *2020 Defence Strategic Update* (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2020), 16.
15. On climate change see *Defence Strategic Review*, 41–2.
16. *Ibid.*, 58.
17. *Ibid.*
18. On 1RAR's deployment see Albert Palazzo, *Australian Military Operations in Vietnam* (Canberra: Army History Unit, 2009), 2nd edition, 23–6.
19. *Defence Strategic Review*, 58.
20. Chris Smith and Albert Palazzo, *Coming to Terms with the Modern Way of War: Precision Missiles and the Land Component of the Joint Force* (Canberra: Australian Army, 2016).
21. On this theme see Albert Palazzo, 'The Australian Army's Coming Strategic Role: The Implications of the Precision Strike Revolution', *Land Power Forum*, 16 June 2022, <https://researchcentre.army.gov.au/library/land-power-forum/australian-armys-coming-strategic-role>.
22. Albert Palazzo, 'Crossing 2000 Kilometres of Death', *Land Power Forum*, 17 September 2019, <https://researchcentre.army.gov.au/library/land-power-forum/crossing-2000-kilometres-death>.
23. *Defence Strategic Review*, 58–60.
24. On the Army's gains and losses see *ibid.*
25. On the Guided Weapons and Explosive Ordnance Enterprise see *ibid.*, 68; and 'Guided Weapons and Explosive Ordnance Enterprise', Department of Defence. On the reasons for the shell crisis and its ramifications see Hew Strachan, 'Shells Crisis of 1915', *International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, 26 February 2016, accessed 3 May 2023, [https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/shells\\_crisis\\_of\\_1915](https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/shells_crisis_of_1915). On missiles see 'Ukraine's air defences could soon run out of missiles, apparent Pentagon leak suggests', *The Guardian*, 10 April 2023, accessed 24 June 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/apr/10/ukraines-air-defences-could-soon-run-out-of-missiles-apparent-pentagon-leak-suggests>.
26. Albert Palazzo, 'Precision and the Consequences for the Modern Battlefield', *Small Wars Journal*, 16 September 2016, <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/precision-and-the-consequences-for-the-modern-battlefield>.
27. On weaponising the littoral ships see Albert Palazzo, 'Adding Bang to the Boat: A Call to Weaponise Land 8710', *Land Power Forum*, 1 December 2020, <https://researchcentre.army.gov.au/library/land-power-forum/adding-bang-boat-call-weaponise-land-8710>.
28. See Toshi Yoshihara and James R Holmes, *Red Star over the Pacific: China's Rise and the Challenge to U.S. Maritime Strategy*, 2nd Edition (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2018).
29. On the integrated force see *Defence Strategic Review*, 54.
30. For the details of the Army's formation see 'Report on the Military Defence of Australia by a Conference of Senior Military Officers of the Australian Military Forces', vols 1 and 2, 1920, Australian War Memorial, AWM1, item 20/7.



31. Brigade structure taken from 'Organization, Composition and Distribution of Australian Army for War', 25 January 1928, Australian War Memorial, AWM113, item MH1/134.
32. 'Memorandum to Minister from Secretary, 18 December 1934, re: Defence policy: Questions awaiting Settlement', National Archives of Australia, A5954, item 1015/9.
33. On the Army's resistance to the anti-raid mission see Albert Palazzo, 'Failure to Obey: The Australian Army and the First Line Component Deception', *Australian Army Journal* 1, no. 1 (June 2003), 81–95.
34. 'The Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy (October 1956)', in Stephan Frühling (ed.), *A History of Australian Strategic Policy since 1945*, paragraph 36 (Canberra: Department of Defence, 2009) [underlining in original].
35. Palazzo, *The Australian Army*, 237–9.
36. TB Millar, 'Australia's Defence, 1945–1965', in Gordon Greenwood and Norman Harper (eds), *Australia in World Affairs*, 1961–65 (Melbourne: FW Cheshire, 1968), 274.
37. The plan's options are outlined in 'The Composition of the Army', 1956, National Archives of Australia, A6059/2, item 41/441/18.
38. *Commonwealth of Australia, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives*, 4 April 1957, 571–6; Dayton McCarthy, *The Once and Future Army: A History of the Citizen Military Forces, 1947–74* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2003), 64.
39. 'National Service, 1951–59', National Archives of Australia, accessed 27 April 2023, <https://www.naa.gov.au/help-your-research/fact-sheets/national-service-1951-59>.
40. For the division's structure see 'The Pentropic Division', *Australian Army Journal* 129 (February 1960).
41. Ian Kuring, *Red Coats to Cams: A History of Australian Infantry 1788–2001* (Loftus: Australian Military History Publications, 2004), 261–4.
42. 'The Re-Organisation of the AMF 1959/60 – 1951/62', 22 December 1959, National Archives of Australia, A6059/2, item 41/441/69A.
43. Kuring, *Red Coats to Cams*, 264–5.
44. McCarthy, *The Once and Future Army*, 102–4. See also 'List of Existing and CMF Formation and Arms Units of Regiment and Battalion Status, Showing Major Changes Resulting from 1960 Reorganisation', 4 March 1960, National Archives of Australia, A6059/2, item 41/441/69, part 1.
45. 'The Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy (January 1962)', in Frühling (ed.), *A History of Australian Strategic Policy since 1945*, paragraphs 26–32, 64–5.
46. 'The Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy (February 1963)', in Frühling (ed.), *A History of Australian Strategic Policy since 1945*, paragraphs 14–22.
47. *Defence Strategic Review*, 87–8.
48. McCarthy, *The Once and Future Army*, 164.
49. TB Millar, *Australia in Peace and War: External Relations, 1788–1977* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1978), 406.
50. Ibid., 409; Jeffrey Grey, *A Military History of Australia* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 247, 253–4.
51. See Department of Defence, *The Defence of Australia* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1987).
52. 'The Future Shape of the ARA', 7 December 1972, National Archives of Australia, A3688/24, item 584/R1/4.
53. 'Reshaping the Regular Army: ASA Aspects', 20 June 1973, National Archives of Australia, A3688/26, item 584/R1/74.

54. See *Committee of Inquiry into the Citizen Military Forces* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1974) [the Millar Report].
55. Department of Defence, *Australian Defence* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1976), 10.
56. *Ibid.*, 21.
57. 'Minute Paper: Army Development, Proposed Changes to the Field Force', 17 September 1979, National Archives of Australia, A6834, item 14.
58. Paul Dibb, *Review of Australia's Defence Capabilities* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1986), 78–89.
59. *The Defence of Australia*, 53.
60. Department of Defence, *Force Structure Review* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1991), 22–5.
61. Department of Defence, *Australia's Strategic Policy* (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 1997).
62. *Commonwealth of Australia, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives*, 2 December 1997, 11743, accessed 30 April, 2023, <https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22chamber%2Fhansard%2F1997-12-02%2F0001%22;src1=sm1>.
63. Department of Defence, *An Australian Army for the 21st Century* (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 1996).
64. Hugh White, 'The Strategic Review: What's New?', *Journal of the Royal United Services Institute of Australia*, 19 December 1998, 59.
65. 'Albert Einstein', AZ Quotes, accessed 11 May 2023, <https://www.azquotes.com/quote/811850>.



