The Australian Defence Force in northern Australia

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Executive summary

- The Australian Defence Force (ADF) regards northern Australia as strategically important, both for national defence and as a forward base for regional engagement. The ADF presence in northern Australia also directly contributes to the economic and social development of the region.

- A substantial amount of new ADF assets will either be based or operate in the vicinity of northern Australia, requiring new or upgraded facilities. These include new strike and patrol aircraft as well as the Landing Helicopter Docks (LHDs), Australia’s largest ever warships. The increasing presence of US Marine rotations within northern Australia will also require additional infrastructure and base capacity.

- However, future growth in the ADF’s northern Australia presence is constrained. Climate factors affect the ADF’s ability to operate in the region and maintain its infrastructure, while northern Australia’s distance from major population centres increases resource costs and can impede retention of personnel. Accordingly, the most cost-effective improvements will likely come through more efficient defence sustainment provided by local northern Australia defence industries.
Introduction
On 25 September 2012, the Opposition Leader Tony Abbott announced that if the Coalition won the 2013 federal election it would publish a new Defence White Paper within 18 months. He also specifically noted that:

One issue that the next Coalition Defence White Paper will consider is a greater presence of our military forces in northern Australia, especially in resource-rich areas with little or no current military presence. At the very least, the White Paper will examine the need for an upgraded surveillance capability of the sort planned and then cancelled by Labor.¹

This intent was again expressed during the 2013 federal election campaign, in the Coalition’s policy for stronger defence and the Coalition’s 2030 vision for developing northern Australia.² Prime Minister Abbott and the then Minister for Defence, David Johnston, also emphasised northern Australia in a defence context after the election, such as in their joint April 2014 media release, Delivering a world class defence force.³

This research paper provides some background to the history of the defence relationship with northern Australia, an overview of key reports regarding the ADF’s presence in northern Australia and an assessment of the debate for increasing the size and scope of that presence.

Background and context
The issue of a military presence in northern Australia has been an enduring one for Australia’s parliamentarians. In 1940, Adair Blain (Member for Northern Territory) declared in the House of Representatives that:

In a spirit of political complacency we are burying our heads in the sand and leaving the north-west to defend itself. We are [relying] upon its remoteness for security … There are cogent reasons why the Government should concentrate upon the effective control and defence of the north-west of Australia, particularly when we realize that the influence of the Axis powers may extend, and we may even have more enemies than we have today.⁴

More recently in 2014, the Minister for Defence noted ‘we have hundreds of billions of dollars worth of investment in offshore developments, particularly in the north and northwest of Australia’.⁵ Both statements infer that Australia not only needs naval assets to appropriately provide national security, but also appropriate defence facilities located in the region to support the required defence assets.

Substantial analyses on the topic were conducted in the intervening decades by prominent defence commentators, including Ross Babbage, Des Ball and Andrew Davies.⁶ One of the most substantial analytical works is the three volume report, Defence and the Darwin region, published in August 1994 by the consulting group ADI Services for which, at the time, Babbage was Chief General Manager Consulting.⁷ In commissioning the report, the government-appointed ‘Committee on Darwin’ established broad terms of reference regarding the impact of defence activities on Darwin and the increased strategic use of Darwin as a platform for engagement with regional partners. The resulting Report of the Committee on Darwin was published in June 1995.⁸

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³ T Abbott (Prime Minister) and D Johnston (Minister for Defence), Delivering a world class defence force, media release, 4 April 2014, accessed 20 October 2014.
⁸ N Wran, Report of the Committee on Darwin, report prepared for the Treasurer and Northern Territory Chief Minister, Canberra, June 1995.

Australia’s first Defence White Paper (DWP), *Australian Defence*, was published in 1976 during the Fraser Government. In acknowledging the ‘limited’ defence infrastructure then located in north and western Australia, the report asserted ‘the need to develop airfields and patrol craft bases in the more remote parts of Australia, particularly in the north’.9

The 1987 DWP, *The Defence of Australia*, expressed the Hawke Government’s intention ‘to strengthen our northern defences by basing major elements of the Australian Army permanently in northern Australia’ and emphasised the need to develop northern airfield infrastructure.10 Additionally, it said that ‘with increased ADF activity and basing in northern Australia, the Government believes there could be value in developing joint administrative and command arrangements in northern Australia’.11 The following year the ADF established its Northern Command (NORCOM), the command and coordination role of which was initially tested through Exercise Kangaroo 89, ‘Australia’s largest military exercise since the Second World War’.12

*Defending Australia*, the 1994 DWP, further articulated the strategic priority of northern Australia under the Keating Government, in declaring that ‘we also seek to turn the vast and difficult areas of northern Australia to our advantage by ensuring that we can operate better there than any adversary. Our forces are familiar with the environment of northern Australia, and our equipment is optimised for conditions there’.13 The document also contained sections on surveillance and air defence in northern Australia and adjoining maritime areas.

In contrast, the 2000 and 2009 DWPs (produced by the respective Howard and Rudd Governments) made only minor reference to northern Australia. The former emphasised Defence’s surveillance requirements, while the latter reinforced the understanding that northern Australia ‘will always command a significant place in our military contingency planning’.14

However, the 2013 DWP re-asserted the strategic importance of northern Australia:

> the economic importance of northern Australia and our offshore resources has increased and this must be considered in our defence planning. An effective, visible force posture in northern Australia and our northern and western approaches is necessary to demonstrate our capacity and our will to defend our sovereign territory, including our offshore resources and extensive maritime areas.15

Following on from the 2012 Australian Defence Force Posture Review (FPR), the 2013 DWP asserted the Australian Government under Prime Minister Gillard had begun enhancing the ADF’s presence in and familiarity with northern Australia, updating operational plans for defending the north; and developing a better understanding of the ability of civil infrastructure and logistic capacity available to support ADF operations in the north-west.16

**Key recent reports**

In an April 2013 address, the Minister for Defence, Stephen Smith expressed the importance of the Northern Territory as a ‘key element of strategic Defence planning considerations’. The Minister also referred to the nearly completed 2013 Defence White Paper (DWP) and recently published Australian Defence Force Posture Review (FPR) as key documents emphasising northern Australia in strategic defence considerations.17 Both reviews, in addition to other key reports referred to in this section, provide a range of perspectives on defence and northern Australia and offer options for future engagement.

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11. Ibid., p. 61.


**Australian Defence Force Posture Review (2012)**

The 2012 FPR was the first major government review into the positioning of ADF assets since Paul Dibb’s *Review of Australia’s defence capabilities*, published in March 1986, which analysed the ADF’s northern command, facilities and infrastructure. 18

Authored by the senior public servants Allan Hawke and Ric Smith, the 2012 FPR devoted an entire chapter to ‘securing Australia’s north’ and produced eight specific recommendations for further action regarding northern Australia. These recommendations included upgrading defence facilities and continued assessment of supporting civilian infrastructure, increased military presence (including exercises), and improved coordination and communication mechanisms. Additionally, recommendation six noted that ‘while permanent Navy bases in the North West are not operationally necessary, Defence should examine, in consultation with the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (ACBPS), options involving investment to enhance Broome as a forward operating base’. 19


Published by the US-based Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA), the report *Gateway to the Indo-Pacific* asserted that ‘Australia represents, for the time being at least, something of a geographic “sweet spot” in the search for potential [US] operating locations outside the reach of China’s missile forces’. 20 Accordingly, the authors proposed several options for additional US military engagement with northern Australia. For example, the report suggested that after sufficient upgrades, airbases in north-western Australia and the Cocos Islands could ‘substantially increase the persistence of Australian and U.S. combat airpower around critical maritime chokepoints and Southeast Asia’ and work as a significant deterrence measure. 21

However, the report also noted that ‘the biggest impediment to using the north-western air bases, beyond basic cost constraints to improve their facilities, may be the logistical challenge in supplying them’—a fact also emphasised in the Force Posture Review. 22 In response to this, the authors recommended:

Building up Australia’s northern coastal refining capacity, strategic fuel stockpiles, fuel distribution network, and fuel storage capacity should therefore be considered top priorities, not only to maximise the operational benefits derived from the use of these air bases, but also as a means of reducing the vulnerability of U.S. supply lines across the Pacific. 23

**Green Paper on developing northern Australia (2014)**

In June 2014, the Australian Government published its *Green Paper on developing northern Australia*, which included reference to the strategic importance of northern Australia and the implications of this for the ADF. The document asserted that ‘Australia’s strategic focus is shifting to the north, with more emphasis on border protection and engagement with countries in the Asia Pacific. This will only increase over the next decade as the region assumes greater global significance’. 24 It was also noted in the report that despite general community appreciation of the economic benefits defence engagement can have, ‘such engagement can place pressure on local services, urban planning and infrastructure. Any further Defence expansion would need to be built on effective engagement and cooperation with state and territory and local authorities, regional communities and industry’. 25

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21. Ibid., p. 17.
22. Ibid., p. 18.
23. Ibid., p. 19.
25. Ibid., p. 22.
Pivot North: Inquiry into the development of northern Australia (2014)

The Australian Parliament’s Joint Select Committee on northern Australia was established in late 2013 to ‘consider policies for developing the parts of Australia which lie north of the Tropic of Capricorn’ including the potential for further developing defence assets within that region. Following its investigations, the committee’s final report revealed a tension between the Department of Defence on one side and industry and local community groups on the other. The latter groups sought an increased defence presence in northern Australia to drive economic growth; however, the Department cited significant costs and currently limited civilian infrastructure as clear obstacles to increasing defence establishments in northern Australia.26

The Department of Defence submission to the northern Australia committee, noted that ‘as part of responding to and shaping Australia’s strategic environment, Defence is increasing the ADF presence and visibility in northern Australia and enhancing cooperation with allies and partners’.27 The focus on visibility is noteworthy, as it was further stated that ‘there is more Defence activity in the north of Australia than is commonly realised, largely because Defence capabilities usually operate further out than industry and community stakeholders typically see’.28

The Department’s submission also contended that Defence already has a sufficiently strong presence in northern Australia, citing its more than 15,000 employees located in the region and almost 300 properties owned or leased—ranging in size from less than one hectare to the approximate 871,000 hectare Bradshaw Field training area in the Northern Territory.29 The submission further highlighted that ‘Defence spends in the order of $1.5 billion to $2.0 billion per annum in northern Australia’, however, it was acknowledged that this fluctuates significantly, and is ‘highly dependent on capital facilities projects’ (see Appendix 1).30

Current ADF assets, infrastructure and activities

ADF bases

All three ADF services have multiple northern Australia bases. The Army operates from Larrakeyah and Robertson Barracks in the Northern Territory, as well as Lavarack Barracks in Queensland. The Navy is based at HMAS Coonawarra in the Northern Territory and HMAS Cairns in Queensland. The Air Force has RAAF Bases Darwin and Tindal in the Northern Territory and RAAF Base Townsville in Queensland.

Two of the Army’s three multi-role combat brigades are based in northern Australia; with the 1st Brigade predominantly located at Robertson Barracks and the 3rd Brigade—consisting of more than 4,000 personnel—located at Lavarack Barracks.32 Notably, 1st Brigade was moved to Darwin in 1992 following the 1991 Force Structure Review’s recommendation to have more regular units based in northern Australia.33 The Army also operates three Regional Force Surveillance Units in northern Australia; the Pilbara Regiment, 51st Battalion (Far North Queensland Regiment) and the North-West Mobile Force (NORFORCE). Although NORFORCE is based at Darwin’s Larrakeyah Barracks, its personnel (60 per cent of which are Aboriginal soldiers) patrol 1.8 million square kilometres spanning the Northern Territory and Western Australia’s Kimberley region.34

In order to increase the operational capacity of the ADF’s northern bases, various potential upgrades of their facilities have been suggested. These include extending the wharf at HMAS Coonawarra to appropriately dock a larger replacement of the existing Armidale class patrol boats (10 of which are stationed there) and providing...

27. Ibid., pp. 52–56. The Department of Defence has previously commissioned analysis of Defence’s economic contribution to northern Australia; see KPMG Econtech, Economic report into the major defence bases in the Northern Territory, report prepared for the Department of Defence, September 2010, accessed 3 November 2014.
29. Ibid., p. 5.
30. Ibid., op. cit., p. 3.
31. Ibid., p. 7. For further information on Defence major capital facilities projects, see Appendix 1.
further accommodation for the LHDs with a second deep-water port east of Darwin. These upgrades would be significant, as commentators have noted that Darwin’s commercial port has often been required to facilitate berthing for large warships. Compounding this strain is the suggestion that the increased US Marine presence in Darwin would likely require additional wharf infrastructure. In response to these pressures—particularly relating to support for the LHDs—the Government announced in June 2015 that a Multi User Barge Ramp Facility would be constructed in the Port of Darwin, to be completed by mid-2016.

In addition to these permanent facilities, the Air Force operates three ‘bare bases’: RAAF Bases Curtin and Learmonth in Western Australia and RAAF Base Scherger in Queensland. These facilities hold limited caches of defence stores, bedding and catering equipment; however, deterioration due to poor storage conditions has led to reforms being undertaken to reduce these cache holdings by 25 per cent. This has allowed more stock to be maintained at a centralised location to facilitate better maintenance and stocktaking.

The authors of the CSBA report, *Gateway to the Indo-Pacific*, specifically noted the strategic benefits of greater use of these bare bases, despite acknowledging the logistical challenge of supplying remote locations. However, greater use of remotely operated unmanned systems may offer a solution.

**Defence Housing**

Just over a quarter of Defence Housing Australia’s (DHA) total housing stock and nearly 40 per cent of its on-base properties are located in northern Australia, almost exclusively within RAAF Bases Darwin and Tindal. However, this housing needs substantial improvements, in DHA’s view, as ‘the standard of existing on-base housing at RAAF Base Darwin is significantly below that provided to ADF members in other areas and does not comply with the minimum standard of the Defence Housing Classification Policy’.

DHA also acquired 405 allotments of land within Darwin during 2013–14, to supplement the existing 2,261 DHA properties located there. New construction is underway at both Larrakeyah Barracks and RAAF Base Tindal, and the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works is undertaking reviews into further development proposals at RAAF Bases Darwin and Tindal. However, new developments—particularly in the vicinity of existing Darwin bases—are understood to be restricted by urban encroachment.

**US military rotations**

Minister for Defence, David Johnston, noted in his October 2014 address to the American Chamber of Commerce in Australia:

> As economic, political and military influence continue to shift toward the Indo-Pacific it is in Australia’s and the region’s interest to support a strong US presence as a means of upholding regional stability...

> This is why Australia has repeatedly conveyed its support for the United States’ rebalance to the region.

> This is also why Australia is working closely with the US to implement the Force Posture initiatives in northern Australia.

These initiatives were originally announced in November 2011 by Prime Minister Julia Gillard and President Barack Obama, and incorporated rotations of US Marines to be stationed in Darwin and increased deployment

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43. N Pittaway, ‘Northern Territory increasing their Defence focus’, op. cit., p. 25.

of US aircraft through northern Australia.\textsuperscript{45} Following this announcement, the number of US Marines deployed to northern Australia per rotation increased from 250 personnel in 2012 to 1,150 personnel in 2014. They are accommodated at the Army’s Robertson Barracks and RAAF Base Darwin and in October 2013 the Australian Government announced that $11 million would be spent developing new facilities at these bases to accommodate the expanding number of deployed US Marines.\textsuperscript{46}

As part of this process, Noetic Solutions and Deloitte Access Economics were commissioned to report on the respective economic and social impact of US Marines rotations in northern Australia. They published their findings in August 2012 and April 2013 and identified that an initial rotational presence of US Marines would produce a ‘small and positive increase in economic activity’ and a ‘minimal or even negligible’ social impact.\textsuperscript{47} Also, at the most recent annual Australia-United States Ministerial Consultations (AUSMIN) held in August 2014, the Minister for Defence announced the signing of the legally-binding ‘Force Posture Agreement’ which represents the ‘legal and financial framework for the force posture initiatives’ established in 2011 between Australia and the US.\textsuperscript{48}

While stationed in northern Australia, US Marines participated in bilateral exercises with the ADF, including Exercise Koolendong 2014, the final training exercise of the most recent US Marine rotation.\textsuperscript{49}

**Planned ADF assets**

**Landing Helicopter Docks (LHDs)**

On 28 November 2014, the Australian Navy commissioned the first of two LHDs to be acquired by 2016. Prime Minister Abbott noted at the commissioning ceremony that the LHD HMAS Canberra ‘is our largest ever warship’, which would serve as a highly capable assault ship in addition to providing humanitarian assistance capabilities.\textsuperscript{50}

Although the LHDs will be based at Garden Island in Sydney, it is anticipated that most of their service will be in northern Australia, particularly through interaction with the Townsville-based 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, which has been designated as the Australian Army’s ‘Amphibious Battle Group’.\textsuperscript{51} Although Townsville’s berthing facilities have been described as ‘adequate’, docking facilities at both Cairns and Darwin will require improvements to support at least one docking LHD.\textsuperscript{52}

**F-35A Lightning II**

The Australian Government is acquiring 72 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) F-35A aircraft to replace the current FA/18 Hornet and Super Hornet fleet. These aircraft will deliver the RAAF’s next generation strike aircraft capability. One of the JSF squadrons will be based at RAAF Base Tindal in the Northern Territory, with the other two squadrons located at RAAF Base Williamtown in New South Wales.\textsuperscript{53}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{45} J Gilliard (Prime Minister) and B Obama (US President), \textit{Australia–United States force posture initiatives}, media release, 16 November 2011, accessed 31 October 2014.
\textsuperscript{50} T Abbott (Prime Minister), \textit{Remarks at the HMAS Canberra commissioning ceremony, Sydney}, media release, 28 November 2014, accessed 22 December 2014.
\textsuperscript{52} J Kerr, ‘NT facilities get a good exercising’, op. cit., p. 26.
\textsuperscript{53} Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), \textit{F-35A Lightning II}, RAAF website, accessed 5 November 2014.
\end{flushleft}
Under the RAAF’s AIR 6000 Phase 2A/B ‘New Air Combat Capability Facilities Project’, new facilities to accommodate the JSF squadron at RAAF Base Tindal are being built. One report suggests these could cost almost $500 million.\textsuperscript{54} Further construction works within the project are also proposed for RAAF Base Townsville and the ‘bare bases’ in northern Australia—RAAF Base Curtin, RAAF Base Learmonth and RAAF Base Scherger.\textsuperscript{55}

**P-8A Poseidon aircraft and Triton UAVs**

On 21 February 2014, Prime Minister Abbott announced the approved acquisition of eight P-8A Poseidon aircraft to replace the RAAF’s current AP-3C Orion fleet. It is anticipated that the new aircraft will all be operational by 2021. The total cost of this acquisition is approximately $4 billion, a quarter of which will be spent on developing facilities at RAAF Base Edinburgh in South Australia, and other locations.\textsuperscript{56}

Less than a month later the Prime Minister announced the Government’s commitment to acquire the Triton unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) capability to be based at RAAF Base Edinburgh. According to the Prime Minister, in conjunction with other RAAF assets—such as the P-8A Poseidon—‘these aircraft will patrol Australia’s vast ocean approaches, and work closely with other existing and future Australian Defence Force assets to secure our ocean resources, including energy resources off northern Australia, and help to protect our borders’. The Prime Minister’s statement also noted that the total number of Triton UAVs will be determined in 2016.\textsuperscript{57}

**Chinook ‘Foxtrot’ helicopters**

The Australian Army’s 5th Aviation Regiment, located at RAAF Base Townsville, will receive seven new CH-47F Chinook ‘Foxtrot’ helicopters to enhance the Army’s cargo helicopter capability, procured through the US Foreign Military Sales program. A media release issued on 5 May 2015 indicated that two flight simulators have already been provided and that the first two Chinook ‘Foxtrots’ had been commissioned into service. Additionally, $49.8 million would be spent in constructing facilities to support and sustain the new helicopters at RAAF Base Townsville, to be completed by mid-2017.\textsuperscript{58}

**Future opportunities and constraints**

Although policymakers and analysts consistently recognise that northern Australia is of prominent strategic importance for Australian defence interests, there remains substantial debate as to what constitutes an appropriate defence posture within the region. For example, Andrew Davies, senior analyst at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), has noted that the increased military cooperation between Australia and the US would likely require an incremental rise in ADF assets in northern Australia, with the ongoing US Marines presence in Darwin a tangible example of this cooperation.\textsuperscript{59}

However, despite the benefits of such incremental increases, Davies also cautioned against too much focus on northern basing informed by an enduring ‘Defence of Australia’ rationale, and is unconvinced by the premise that northern-based resource industries require an enhanced ADF presence.\textsuperscript{60} A similar view was expressed by Vice Admiral Ray Griggs of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) in an interview published in September 2013:

> [RAN ships] are now required to go through the offshore platforms to establish communications, to show that presence. We are trying to increase some of our exercising up in that area, both ADF-wise and at a Navy level. There’s now a strong focus on the North-West. There are still those who say that it’s not enough, and that we


\textsuperscript{55} Department of Defence, *AIR 6000 Phase 2A/B – New Air Combat Capability Facilities Project*, Department of Defence website, accessed 5 November 2014.

\textsuperscript{56} T Abbott (Prime Minister), *P-8A Poseidon aircraft to boost Australia’s maritime surveillance capabilities*, media release, 21 February 2014, accessed 1 December 2014.

\textsuperscript{57} T Abbott (Prime Minister), *Triton unmanned aerial vehicles to boost maritime surveillance capabilities*, media release, 13 March 2014, accessed 1 December 2014.


\textsuperscript{59} A Davies ‘Northern Australia: how much defence is enough?’, ASPI Strategist blog, 27 October 2014, accessed 5 June 2015.

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid. The ‘Defence of Australia’ policy, popularised following the Vietnam War, heavily emphasised the value of military self-reliance and essentially contended that the ADF should focus on being able to defend Australia without assistance from its allies. See Frühling, *Australian defence policy and the concept of self-reliance*, *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 68(5), 2014, pp. 531–547, accessed 5 June 2015.
The Department of Defence submission to the Joint Select Committee on northern Australia also highlighted some constraints on the significant transfer of defence assets to the region. These included industry and labour capacity, commercial and residential encroachment, infrastructure, liveability, and environmental and geographic factors. Specifically, it was stated that ‘northern Australia’s weather remains the greatest restriction on Defence activities’, while ‘the liveability of Defence locations affects attraction and retention of Defence personnel’. The critical importance of social infrastructure and amenities for ADF personnel is clearly demonstrated in the fact that about half of the 15,000 defence personnel in northern Australia are located in Townsville—Queensland’s biggest population centre outside of Greater Brisbane.

Even if these obstacles did not exist, the cost of relocating defence assets is substantial. For instance, the transfer of multiple Defence units and facilities from Moorebank to Holsworthy Barracks cost $870 million, even though both locations are in the same city. Darwin remains heavily isolated with few road and rail links, while its port facilities are limited in their capabilities. This has led to a situation where Armidale patrol boats stationed in Darwin have had to travel to Brisbane and Henderson (Western Australia) for repairs or maintenance. In response to such challenges, the Northern Territory Government has emphasised a local defence industry which focuses on sustainment—both for locally operated defence platforms and other assets brought to the area during military exercises. This is already a legitimate strength, demonstrated through established expertise in servicing heavy equipment in the resource and transport sectors.

Conclusion

A substantial component of the ADF’s strategic considerations regarding northern Australia will continue to be resource allocation, both in terms of infrastructure and personnel. It has been reported that, in the next decade, an estimated $3 billion is to be spent in the Northern Territory on approximately 30 defence-related construction projects. This proposed increase in defence-related investment in northern Australia would bring tangible economic benefits as well as fulfilling the ADF’s strategic requirements. However, over the past decade spending on approved defence capital investment projects in northern Australia has varied significantly from year to year, with no reason to suggest the following decade will be any different. Additionally, it is notable that the number of Defence personnel based in the Northern Territory is at its lowest level in over a decade, having dropped more than 15 per cent from a peak in 2009–10 of 7,215 employees (comprising 7.3 per cent of the total defence workforce) to 6,096 in 2013–14 (see Appendix 1).

Accordingly, it is unlikely that the ADF would desire to make any substantial changes to its northern Australia force structure in the near future, given the resource implications and constraints upon such actions. Instead, the ADF and related local supporting industries will most likely continue to seek to incrementally improve facilities while maximising the efficiency and effectiveness of current services. This could involve increasing defence-related sustainment as a percentage of related companies’ total business and increasing specialisation, which would likely deliver efficiency benefits. The Northern Territory government has specifically noted that improved defence sustainment industry could also provide new opportunities in both domestic and international markets. However, the Defence Department has cautioned that industry capacity will be a determining factor

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62. Department of Defence, Submission to the Joint Select Committee on Northern Australia, op. cit., p. 8.
63. Ibid., p. 11.
65. Department of Defence, Submission to the Joint Select Committee on Northern Australia, op. cit., p. 8.
70. Information derived from Department of Defence, Annual Reports, accessed 22 May 2015.
in any future growth, which will only be enhanced by both increased funding and certainty of future work. To that end, the Government’s proposed new Defence White Paper, Defence Investment Plan and Naval Shipbuilding Plan could provide some renewed clarity, upon their anticipated release in the second half of 2015.73

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72. Department of Defence, Submission to the Joint Select Committee on Northern Australia, op. cit., p. 7.
# Appendix 1

**Defence workforce in the Northern Territory**

(source: Australian Department of Defence Annual Reports)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Permanent Navy</th>
<th>Permanent Army</th>
<th>Permanent Air Force</th>
<th>Res. Navy</th>
<th>Res. Army</th>
<th>Res. Air Force</th>
<th>APS^</th>
<th>NT total</th>
<th>NT total as % Defence workforce</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>2004–05</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>3,368</td>
<td>1,092</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>679</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>6,185</td>
<td>6.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005–06</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>3,418</td>
<td>1,029</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>639</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>6,157</td>
<td>7.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006–07</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>3,612</td>
<td>1,020</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>692</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>6,489</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007–08</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>3,786</td>
<td>1,048</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>885</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>7,004</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–09</td>
<td>639</td>
<td>3,895</td>
<td>1,013</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>721</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>6,890</td>
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<td>1,093</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>6,782</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011–12</td>
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<td>3,520</td>
<td>1,069</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>6,627</td>
<td>6.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012–13</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>3,468</td>
<td>1,020</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>657</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>6,484</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013–14</td>
<td>668</td>
<td>3,280</td>
<td>979</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>6,096</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*number of personnel accurate as at 30 June of the financial year.

^does not include Defence Materiel Organisation personnel

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