

**CA SPEECH TO ARMY SYMPOSIUM
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Thank you for the terrific welcome. Its my first visit to Washington as Chief of Army and I very much appreciate the opportunity to be able to speak with you today.

In my job I have the great fortune of being able to talk with military leaders from not only my own nation, but from many other countries around the world. While we all have differing cultures, strategic imperatives, force structures and sizes, and societal values, we are all linked by the common thread of striving to be experts in the military profession. To varying degrees we are all dedicated to a constant process of learning and up-skilling, and being better at adapting to circumstances as they change.

I would hope that this symposium provides an opportunity for all of you here to learn a little more about our Army. That we're here today is the result of the hard work of Brigadier West and his staff. The aim is to provide you with a well-rounded overview of our Army, how we have changed over the last year (and continue to change) and how we fit within Australia's national security strategy.

During my talk I intend to outline some of the challenges that we face in the Australian Army, and how we are addressing those challenges. Obviously, we work at a different scale than the US Army, but the character of the

problems we face on a day to day basis will be very much the same. I hope that over the short time we have together, I can provide you with some insights into where I intend taking the Australian Army during my time in Command. But before that I would like to start with an examination of the Australian context, what defines our approach to national security and how that, in turn, shapes the structure, posture and doctrine of the Australian Army.

THE AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT

It would be difficult to talk in detail about the Australian Army, without some knowledge of our strategic circumstances and how these circumstances influence how I do business. I will also briefly discuss the relative level of resourcing we are able to bring to bear in meeting our strategic challenges.

I think it would be fair to say we Aussies look at the world a little differently.

Australia is an island continent roughly the size of the continental United States. Our nation has a population roughly the size of Texas and an economy the approximate size of Illinois. Although small compared to the US Army, the Australian Army remains the largest single component of the Australian Defence Force. As Chief of Army, I currently command just over 29 000 regular soldiers, nearly 17 000 reserve soldiers and around 1000 civilian personnel. At its heart the Australian Army is a seven infantry battalion organisation.

Australian soldiers are deployed in locations from Iraq and Afghanistan to The Solomon Islands, and East Timor to The Lebanon. And while I am not responsible for the day to day oversight of our deployed operations – this is the remit of our Commander Joint Operations - I would suggest that my role in the generation and preparation of land forces to sustain these operations is every bit as challenging as the operations themselves.

But why are these soldiers where they are? Well, every few years, our Department of Defence conducts a review of our Defence needs very much along the lines of your Quadrennial Defence Review process we call this the Defence White Paper. Prior to May this year, our last White Paper was released in 2000. It is an understatement to say that there had been a few changes in the security environment since that time. So, in May this year, our Government released a new Defence White Paper, titled Force 2030, that aims to address how the Australian Defence Force will be postured over the next two decades. The Government also specified that a new White Paper would be produced every five years with annual updates in the between years.

The paper describes how the ADF can contribute to ongoing operations against violent extremists, particularly in places such as Afghanistan. It addresses the changes in the distribution of global power that have occurred in the last decade, particularly with the emergence of China and India, and the modernisation of military forces throughout the Asia-Pacific.

Australia's most basic strategic interest remains the defence of our Nation against direct armed attack. This includes armed attacks by other states, and by non-state actors with the capacity to employ strategic capabilities, including weapons of mass destruction. This most basic strategic interest applies regardless of the perceived intentions of others, and is a function of our geography as well as current and future capability levels in our region.

I should note here that we believe it is premature to state that war among states, including the major powers, has been eliminated as a feature of the international system. While growing economic and other relationships between states may act as a brake on the resort to force between them, such wars cannot be ruled out. Because of this, Australian policy is that the main role of the Australian Defence Force will continue to be an ability to engage in conventional combat against other armed forces. But this is not to say that we cannot, or will not, be used for other purposes. I will discuss later in my speech how we are balancing this requirement with the conduct of contemporary counterinsurgency operations.

Our next most important strategic interest is the security, stability and cohesion of our immediate neighbourhood. We have a wide range of diplomatic, economic, cultural and other links with countries such as Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, East Timor, New Zealand and the South Pacific island states. This may involve military operations, in coalition with others as required, including the protection of our nationals. On occasion it

will require the conduct of stabilisation interventions as occurred in East Timor in 1999 and 2006, and in Solomon Islands in 2003.

We will also continue to have particular responsibilities to assist our neighbours in dealing with humanitarian and disaster relief needs, and to support their stability and security. We anticipate that Australia will be expected to take a leadership role within the South Pacific if these states are overwhelmed by a natural or man-made crisis. In recent weeks, this has included significant commitments in the wake of the Samoa Tsunami and the Indonesian earthquake in Sumatra.

Beyond our immediate neighbourhood we have an enduring interest in the stability of the wider Asia-Pacific region, from North Asia to the Eastern Indian Ocean. In particular, our neighbours in Southeast Asia sit astride our northern approaches, through which any hostile forces would have to pass to sustainably project force against Australia. These approaches could also be used to threaten Australia's trade and the supply of resources. So we would be concerned by aggression against the nations or the critical sea lanes of the region, or the threat of intrusion into the region by potentially hostile powers able to project military power against Australia.

Outside our region, Australia's security cannot be assured in an instable world. We therefore have a national interest in preserving an international order that restrains aggression by states against each other, and which can effectively manage other risks and threats, such as the proliferation of WMD,

terrorism, state fragility and failure, intra-state conflict, and the security impacts of climate change and resource scarcity.

In particular, we continue to be actively engaged in operations in southern Afghanistan. Our operations are designed to disrupt the Taliban insurgency and hamper their freedom of movement and influence in Uruzgan province. We are also helping to build Afghan institutions, particularly in the security sector, by mentoring the Afghan National Army. We are developing infrastructure, including facilities for Afghan security forces, as well as schools, hospitals, health centres, bridges and causeways and mosques. As our Prime Minister has stated repeatedly over the last two years, we see ourselves in this campaign for the long haul. Indeed our most recent Army Sustainment Campaign Plan is a detailed synchronisation plan for how I generate and prepare land forces for this theatre over a protracted period.

This geographical approach to our strategic interests recognises that in military terms we must be prepared to act decisively close to home, while being ready to contribute further away from our shores. Close to home, it would be more likely that we would be able to do something decisive about contingencies that require military responses, and that no-one else would have as deep an interest in acting. Further away, such as in Afghanistan, it would be likely that our capacity to act decisively through military means on our own would be more limited.

Of course, Australia might be greatly affected by developments far away, and even serious developments close to home might not always have a significant impact on Australian national life. Taking a geographical approach to our strategic interests is not to ignore any of this - it is simply to recognise that, all other things being equal, our capacity for influence and our imperative for action are going to be a function of proximity.

As you know, strategy is about more than just setting goals and defining interests. It is also about the careful allocation of resources to achieving goals, and ensuring the right balance in applying those resources between current operations and future contingencies, as well as achieving an appropriate balance of investment between land, maritime, air, space and cyber capabilities.

We are very fortunate in our Army, and in the wider military, that we have been exempt from budget cuts that many other Government departments have experienced in the wake of the recent financial crisis. Indeed, we will receive 2.5 per cent fixed indexation to the Defence budget from 2009-10 to 2030.

However over this 20 year period, there is little flexibility in spending across the Department as a whole. As a consequence of this, as well as rising personnel costs and the likelihood of unforeseen operational requirements, I need to generate my own agility to ensure I can respond quickly to changes in the environment and make investments in improving capability that may not have been foreseen. Fortunately, the White Paper provides a mechanism that

will permit me to reinvest resources generated through more efficient processes back into Defence and back into the Army.

So as a result, the convergence of our strategic environment, national interests and the need to create flexibility in long term resourcing has several implications for my Army:

- First, we need to do a lot with a small force.
- Second, that small force needs to maintain a broad range of capabilities that can be tailored for specific operations and contingencies.
- Third, to achieve this we must recruit the best people our nation has to offer, and that then we must train, educate and equip them appropriately to retain them.
- Fourth, we must create agility for ourselves by becoming more efficient as an institution to free up resourcing for higher priority capabilities.
- Finally, from myself on down, we must ensure our people are well led, are imbued with our values of Courage, Initiative and Teamwork and possess an adaptive culture to permit the agility and flexibility required in a small, highly professional Army.

So how do I, as Chief of Army, achieve this? The recent White Paper endorsed our *Adaptive Army* initiative. This reformation of Army builds on the lessons we have learned over the last decade and will improve our training and equipment preparedness for current operations, while also re-balancing our capacity between the regular and reserve components. This

transformation will see us remove hollowness, create a more efficient institutional Army and put us on sound foundations for future operations.

AN ADAPTIVE ARMY

I released our Adaptive Army initiative in August last year. At its heart, I seek to inculcate an Adaptive Culture within Army. I think we have always been adaptive on operations. But to do that most effectively - in a systemic manner throughout the deployed force - you need an adaptive culture throughout the organisation that is building the force (individuals and units) for deployments.

This has not been the case in the past. Therefore we needed to look at the Army as an institution, not just a fighting force, to ensure it had an right culture, and that it had the right feedback loops and lesson retention to be adaptive. I am convinced that reinforcement of an adaptive culture will see us best placed to address the challenges of the contemporary and future security environments.

When we started this process last year, the extant structure of Army's Functional Commands had been around since 1973. As you can imagine, quite a bit has changed in the world since then! So, while this approach served us well for a time, it tended to make Army too insular and too Single Service focussed. Army's internal structures also failed to keep pace with the developments with our higher joint command and control structures. We had too many headquarters, and our processes did not reflect the fact that we were

supplying Land Forces to joint operations which are being run by our Joint Operations Command.

Because of our stove-piped structure, we also lacked agility in learning and disseminating the lessons from contemporary operations. During the period of relative tranquillity of the 1980s and early'90s these issues were not as critical as they have become in the current environment and we bureaucratized our Army.

Analysis of our operations since 1999 also revealed weaknesses in our structures, and processes, for generating personnel and organisations for operations. I concluded that we needed a more systematic approach to adaptation within the force generation and preparation of Army force elements.

The result is our ongoing the *Adaptive Army* initiative. We have set ourselves six aims which are displayed on this slide.

Over the past year this initiative has made some significant headway. I would like to describe some of these to you before discussing our next steps.

We have restructured ourselves at the Army and Functional Command levels, aligning our command and control with temporal learning loops. This is somewhat of a revolution for us. In the Australian Army we have traditionally organised along functional lines. That is: all training is done in one Command; all land combat forces were in another. Restructuring around

short, medium and long term learning loops is a different approach. It is founded on what we have learned on a variety of operations since 1999. It is also informed by a decade of research into complex adaptive systems by our Defence Science and Technology Organisation. I believe we are already seeing the benefits of this approach.

We have combined our old Land and Training Commands to create Forces Command in Sydney. It has enabled us to implement a new, unified Army training continuum. This will assist us to regain our foundation warfighting skills which, quite frankly, are under pressure as a result of a decade of sustained operational deployments. This single training model is also aligned with our operational force generation cycle.

One of the big aims of our new training continuum is to enhance the transparency of the entire training regime within Army. This allows me to reduce the training and resource duplication which had become endemic in the old Command structure. It also allows me to ensure that the training we give our people is open to constant scrutiny and validation. Finally, the new continuum will allow our people to clearly see the quality of their training which in turn will enhance their confidence on operations.

We have recently re-roled our regular 1st Division Headquarters to focus on the force preparation of force elements for operations and contingencies. To assist, we established a new organisation called the Land Combat Readiness Centre as Army's centre of excellence in mission specific training, mission

rehearsal exercises, and operational certification. We aim for it to be the master of the short adaptive learning loop. As such, it receives and analyses all current and Post Operational Reports and other key insights to turn lessons into actions in the shortest possible time.

We have also started enhancing how we communicate with our workforce, particularly with internet social networking mediums such as Facebook, Twitter and intranet forums and web pages. This is a key element of shortening our decision cycles by linking as many people as possible into our lessons learned process. This has been a very interesting learning experience for us. We have found that we can get our messages out – especially with Facebook, Twitter and our nascent Army Wiki – much more quickly than has been the case in the past.

We are also reviewing the manner in which materiel is consumed to ensure it aligns with efforts to not only drive down the cost of ownership, but to allow reinvestment in higher priority areas. The first tranche of this reform has commenced with changes to the way Army holds, provisions and consumes combat clothing and personal field equipment. This is resulting in significant cultural change in Army. I say this because in the past we have practiced inefficient procedures because our Commanders have not trusted the logistics system to get them what they need, when they need it, where they needed it.

But promisingly this is changing. We are seeing the behaviour of our Commanders change. They are no longer holding large stocks of clothing,

equipment and repair parts in their units because they are seeing a more responsive logistic system. We have already realised significant savings through better Provisioning and Stock Management Policies and, frankly, through hard nosed leadership on the rationalisation of material.

Another area we are focussing on is in equipment maintenance. We are reviewing all our ground vehicle, watercraft and aircraft fleets to ensure we have the most effective and efficient maintenance and usage procedures. For example, we have found that we maintain our Blackhawks about a third more than the US Army. And in one fleet of light ground vehicles, simply reducing the requirement for monthly non-technical inspections to every second month has had saving in nearly 100 000 man hours per year with no detrimental capability impact. These examples will give you a flavour of how I intend to create more agility in the Force and to make our resources go further without capability impact.

Finally, in the materiel realm, I think it is clear that our ability to adapt to changes in the environment to ensure our soldiers are best equipped for operations needs further improvement. That is not to say we haven't seen great improvements over the decade – we certainly have. I just think we can do better by streamlining our rapid acquisition processes at home to be more agile in our support of our soldiers on operations.

The early indicators are that we are only just seeing the tip of the iceberg on what is possible with material management. More importantly, we're seeing

that our workforce understands this, is behind us on the reforms we're setting in place and is now freely contributing ideas for gaining more agility.

So I am satisfied that we have achieved much in the past year's implementation of *Adaptive Army*. But, I am not yet satisfied that this initiative has reached anywhere near its full potential. In several areas in particular there is much still to be done.

In the Training and Education stream, we continue to review the strategic environment to ensure our concepts, doctrine, training and education are relevant, and prepare our people appropriately for contemporary and future operations. To this end, I recently released our latest version of *Adaptive Campaigning*. This document is Army's Future Land Operating Concept and provides the conceptual and philosophical framework, and force modernisation guidance, to achieve these requirements.

Adaptive Campaigning incorporates recent operational lessons and insights and is informed by current scientific research, worldwide trends, as well as domestic and international developments. Most importantly, it describes the actions of an integrated Land Force response, as part of a Whole of Government approach, to the demands of the types of operations that we will face in the future, as well as those we are undertaking right now in Afghanistan and East Timor.

Several weeks ago, I was visiting our task force deployed in East Timor. They have shaped their entire tactical approach around the *Adaptive*

Campaigning philosophy. It was evident that the synchronisation of population protection, indigenous capacity building, joint land combat, information actions, and population support is something that our deployed soldiers are starting to appreciate – and implement – down to squad level. The early signs are that this is a robust and effective approach to the challenges of contemporary and future operations. *Adaptive Campaigning* is now available on our Army internet site if you would like a copy to read.

By far, the most challenging aspect of our *Adaptive Army* initiative is the need to improve our approach to Knowledge Management. This is an integral part of Army's core business and a vital element to get right in the *Adaptive Army* initiative.

I'm a passionate believer that the IQ of our Army does not reside solely in its senior officers. It resides in its forty five thousand plus regular, reserve and civilian members. However, currently I cannot exploit the full IQ of the Army– and all the great ideas that are out there – because we are not all linked up.

Only 20% of the soldiers in our Army are currently able to regularly use our internal Defence computer network. This means that the vast majority of my soldiers – regular and reserve – have limited capacity to contribute to the way we go about our business, to help improve our processes, or even participate in shared services which free up uniformed positions from positions which are more appropriate for civilians. This is something I am absolutely

determined to address. While we are making some inroads through the establishment of our Army Knowledge Domain and the use of internet-based social networking, we need a broader solution that allows all members of the Army – regardless of their location – access to all the functionality of the Defence network.

It goes without saying that the way people communicate and share information has changed significantly over the last decade. We have gone from computer databases to computing clouds. The use of blogs to share ideas, and wikis to retain and share knowledge, has not only increased the number of people who can access information. It demands that we review, and where necessary, change how we in our traditional hierarchical organisations can exploit these technologies.

I am aware that the use of blogs is part of the curriculum at the US Army Command and General Staff College. I think that is to be greatly applauded and I would be very interested in what has been learned from this. Given the social networking tools that are available to us, it would be almost negligent of senior leaders like me to not enable their use. I know that many are fearful of the security risks posed through the use of such media. Armies confront and deal with risk as an essential element of their being. Lets confront the risk, strategise around it and move on. Social networking tools need to be incorporated into our knowledge dominance arsenal.

So the challenge here for me is to fully connect our people, ensure that they are well informed, that they have the capacity to contribute to how we structure, operate and share lessons. This is a key part of realising my aspirations with the *Adaptive Army* initiative.

But in realising these aspirations, I also have to achieve a balancing act between the maintenance of an Army that is excellent at contemporary operations and an Army that is well-prepared for a range of future contingencies. That is, achieving the right balance of investment of people, equipment and financial resources in current operations versus potential future operations.

ACHIEVING BALANCE

As Chief of Army I have to realise that the current versus future dilemma I face in Army is just part of the broader requirement to balance investment across land, maritime, air and cyber capabilities. I need to fight for my Service but be pragmatic enough to provide good corporate leadership inside our resource constrained National environment.

Every nation must achieve its own balancing act based on its strategic circumstances, force composition and the resources available to it. So, with our strategic goals and the resources available to me, how should the Australian Army balance the imperatives of current operations with investment in the future Army? Some have argued that over the last few years we have been overly preoccupied with the current operational

commitments, at the expense of training for the higher end warfighting capabilities that may be required in the future. Indeed there is a vigorous and ongoing debate here in the US, as well as in Britain and other nations about whether land forces should be structured primarily for contemporary counter-insurgency operations, or if they should retain a traditional conventional focus.

As with many things in life, this is not a black and white argument. For my part I don't accept the idea that because the most pressing threat is constituted by highly lethal non-state actors that Army should reconfigure solely as a counter-insurgency force and trade-off our conventional – or foundation - war fighting proficiency. While we need to be able to conduct irregular wars among the people, I must ensure that the Australian Army is still able to defend Australia and fight conventional enemies. Indeed, as I discussed earlier, this is a clear requirement set out in the 2009 Defence White Paper.

I think that the inherent challenges and stresses of an Army's high-intensity, combined-arms training, provides the crucible for the development of exceptionally competent leaders and highly adaptive soldiers and units. It gives our soldiers the **mental and physical toughness** they need, it develops **cohesion in units**, and it inculcates the **confidence, teamwork and initiative** necessary to sustain mission command. I believe that these things comprise the essential foundation of land forces – in whatever Army you serve.

They are the core skills that can be tailored for use in the broadest range of operations.

I believe it is only through the possession of these foundation skills that I can assure Government that not only is our Army able to contribute to contemporary operations, but that it is relevant, agile and able to provide a range of feasible and effective options for future contingencies. I will admit that at times this is a difficult balancing act to achieve – and it does involve a pragmatic approach and constant adjustment.

OUR PEOPLE

Underpinning this balancing act, are our people. While you may think me biased, I believe we are the best small Army in the world. And the simple reason for this is the quality our people. We will remain a force that ‘equips the man or woman’ and not vice versa. When our people aren’t on operations, we need to manage them appropriately. We have a number of reforms underway here to ensure we continue to be able to recruit and retain the best men and women our nation has to offer.

We are changing our career pathways, to ensure that all our personnel have well defined development pathways, regardless of their specialty. Since the beginning of 2009, we have released new Army Officer and Warrant Officer Career Pathways. These redeveloped career programs also take into account the increase in our retirement age from 55 to 60, allowing an extension in the time between promotion gates.

This extension of time between promotions offers some opportunities to us that we have not previously enjoyed. For example, we can send more people on post-graduate study to continue their education. More importantly, it provides me with another mechanism to increase the participation rate of women in our Army. Female soldiers can now take extended breaks from the workforce to have a child with no detriment to their careers. Along these lines, we are also reviewing options such job sharing and purchasing additional leave for those who have pressing family requirements.

We have recently introduced a policy of three year command-team tenures. This is designed to slow tempo at unit level, reduce posting turbulence and reduce the incidence of unaccompanied postings. These types of comprehensive strategies provide our people with maximum opportunity to excel and achieve career aspirations.

A number of new initiatives target improvements in the management of wounded soldiers. A sign of the times is that we have formed an Amputee Mentor Group to support those soldiers who have suffered the amputation of limbs as a result of their wounds on operations, or accidents. We are setting up a PTSD support group. I have also strongly endorsed our participation in the ADF Paralympics Sport Program which aims to assist in the successful return to an active life for our wounded soldiers.

We have developed a range of strategies that deal with the mental health of our soldiers, and provide more support for the families of those with mental

health conditions. Supporting these mental health strategies is an improvement in resilience training in our training institutions. This aims to ensure our soldiers are mentally tough and best prepared for arduous physical and psychological challenges of contemporary operations.

In conclusion, I am convinced that success or failure in responding to the challenges of the future will be determined by our ability to recruit sufficient numbers of quality regular and reserve soldiers and civilians, train them in the requisite skills and trades, and then ensure we employ them in a manner that gives them a desire to remain serving. This remains my over-riding priority as Chief of Army.

CONCLUSION

Writing in his 1948 book ‘Crusade in Europe’, General Eisenhower wrote that *“one of the most important characteristics of the successful officer today is his ability to continue changing his methods, almost even his mental processes, in order to keep abreast of the constant change that modern science, working under the compelling urge of national self-preservation, brings to the battlefield”*.

I use his quote because it is still very relevant to us military professionals today. We all need to be agile of mind to keep abreast of developments in our profession and ensure that we as soldiers maintain relevant and responsive capabilities for our respective Governments.

I reiterate my strong responsibility as the Commander is to inculcate an adaptive culture **throughout** the Australian Army. Of course, cultural issues cannot be dealt with by drawing a new organizational chart. It takes determined leadership and advocacy by leaders at all levels.

We will continue to operate in an environment that places great demands on our people and systems. We must ensure we recruit and retain enough of the right people to address the challenges of future warfare. We must balance our utilisation of the current equipment fleet with the requirement to have the right equipment into the future. We must do this while remaining interoperable with our allies, as well as with our partners in other government agencies.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have covered a lot of ground today and hopefully given you food for thought as well as exposing to you a little more detail of one of your allies. As you can see, as Chief of Army I am required to maintain momentum along a number of different lines of operation and balance immediate demands with cogent planning for the future. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.