



Contact Donna Alexander
Address PO Box 721
Fyshwick ACT 2609
Telephone (02) 6280 4079
Website www.rsl.org.au

MEDIA RELEASE

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RSL WELCOMES DEFENCE WHITE PAPER

Canberra, February 25, 2016 – The Returned & Services League of Australia (RSL) welcomes the release of the Defence White Paper and the outcomes it plans to deliver.

“It is pleasing to note that many of the issues advanced by the RSL in its submission have been picked up in this important document,” said National President, Rear Admiral Ken Doolan AO RAN (Retired). “The linkage between current and former members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) through increased support is particularly welcome.”

The Defence White Paper 2016 appears to be a robust and comprehensive document that achieves a number of important milestones. Chief among these is an agreed ten-year funding model. This will bring clarity and certainty to the management of capability within Defence.

Similarly, the development of an Integrated Investment Program puts the capability emphasis squarely on the requirements of joint capability, rather than the needs of individual services or environments. Of even more importance in the closer term, the Defence White Paper confirms that the Government has directed the ADF to increase its preparedness level across the board in response to a more complex and uncertain strategic environment. The proposals for both major and other capabilities, as well as the ramping up of preparedness levels are welcome news to the Australian Defence Industry Sector that will be the primary beneficiary of this increased activity.

Finally, the RSL welcomes the linkages in the Defence White Paper between current and former ADF members through the increased support through the Department of Veterans’ Affairs (Support for Wounded, Injured and Ill Program). In particular, confirmation that former ADF members with at least three years’ service and who are suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) will have their treatment paid for by the Department of Veterans’ Affairs without the need to establish that their mental health condition is related to their service.

End

If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Donna Alexander on 0427 253 392 or send an email to donna.alexander@rsl.org.au.