

What can be achieved?

Introduction

- 4.1 The feasibility of some aspects of *From Phantom to Force* was questioned by the submissions. In particular, the proposed capability for force expansion was queried, with several of the submissions being sceptical of the ability of the Army to expand in the warning times detailed in *From Phantom to Force*. The feasibility of the personnel model was also called into question. In this section, the committee revisited the force expansion capability and the personnel model.

The Force Expansion Capability

- 4.2 One judgement and two assumptions drove the committee's recommendations on force expansion. These were:
- A committee judgement that the army must be ready to respond to a major threat within two years of warning;
 - An assumption that, aided by ex-serving soldiers and officers, the army could expand its personnel base sufficiently in two years; and
 - An assumption that, with two years of warning, the army could acquire sufficient stocks and equipment to field up to an additional eight brigades.

Warning Time.

- 4.3 As indicated in *From Phantom to Force*, declarations of warning time represent judgements. They provide clear guidance for force structuring and investment priorities. Following the release of *From Phantom to Force*, the committee has been appraised of the difficulty of expanding the army by eight brigades within two years of warning¹. Practically speaking, even if the equipment could be obtained, Australia lacks the trained military personnel base to expand to eight brigades within two years.

The Personnel Base

- 4.4 To create eight brigades requires between 24,000 and 32,000 troops, depending on the structure of the brigades. Between one-third to one-half of this number hold leadership positions that require not only training but also practical and relevant experience. In *From Phantom to Force*, the committee assumed it would satisfy this personnel base by:

- Recalling ex-serving personnel who had the requisite experience as leaders; and
- Training new recruits.

- 4.5 The assumption made by the committee was that ex-serving personnel who had departed from the service could be recalled up to five years after their last military service. This would have provided a theoretical leadership base of 10,000 personnel to provide leaders in the newly created brigades. Subsequent analysis would indicate that this is unrealistic for two reasons:

- after three years the army considers that skills will have eroded to the point that some degree of retraining is required²;
- not all personnel who leave the army are necessarily suited for re-enlistment; and
- not all personnel who leave the army wish to re-enlist.

- 4.6 The committee has consequently had to modify its assumptions on the pool of military leadership that exists within the community. More realistically, the army can re-enlist ex serving personnel³ up to three years
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1 Australian Army Submission 42, and 20 November 2000 committee discussion with HQ 11 Bde and Deployable Joint Force Headquarters.

2 Footnote to DI(A) Pers 16/97, Enlistment of Applicants with Previous Service 8 Sep 97

3 Any soldier with military experience is deemed able to be placed in a position of higher authority if rapid force expansion is necessary. For instance, an experienced private may become a LCPL or CPL in a unit being raised.

after separation from the force. Hence the pool of available military leaders for recall in a defence emergency is theoretically 6000 strong. Assuming that up to 25% of this pool is not suited for leadership positions, for reasons of age, health, experience etc, this in practice, leaves a leadership base of 4,500 personnel.

- 4.7 On the basis that two thirds of a unit is made up from private soldiers⁴, then the availability of 4,500 leaders will support a force of 13,500. Army would therefore be required to train 9000 new recruits to staff this force. The maximum through put of recruits from the Army Recruit Training Centre (ARTC) is currently 6,200 per year.⁵ In any given year this capacity is being used to counter natural attrition which will still be present in time of a defence emergency. The army estimates that it could generate 11,000 recruits per year, but it would need 300 additional instructional staff and a new recruit training facility.⁶
- 4.8 Allowing for the need for additional instructional staff in other army schools, up to 500 additional instructional staff may be needed to achieve force expansion. One solution is to draw the additional staff from units and to backfill these positions with recalled ex-serving personnel. This would mean that the available leadership base for creation of new brigades is more likely to be 4,000, not 4,500. The total force size would therefore be 12,000.
- 4.9 From the evidence provided by the army, it is possible to generate a force of 12,000 personnel within two years. However, these personnel would be proficient individually, not necessarily as collective warfighting teams. Under the personnel constraints outlined, recruits graduating in the second year of expansion might not have sufficient time to finish trade training and would definitely not have sufficient time to complete unit and brigade team training.
- 4.10 Using the current 3rd Brigade staffing as indicative of a 'standard' brigade, it would be possible to create four additional brigades from this personnel base. However, the number of brigades raised could be higher or lower, depending on the impact of technology and warfighting doctrine on army's structures. This is a significant issue that will be driven by the

4 Based on a rifle company (and ignoring the rank of LCPL). The ratio varies significantly between organisations.

5 Australian Army, Submission 42, p. 3.

6 Ibid. The army estimates the construction cost of a new recruit training facility at \$80m. It should be noted that there would be a ripple through impact on staffing and facilities in other army schools which would also have to be calculated. These instructional staff may have to be pulled from units and back filled with ex-serving personnel who have been recalled.

extent to which the army initiates and fosters a technological support base within industry.

- 4.11 The committee supports the Government commitment to the cadet movement, with the increase in annual funding to \$30 million announced in the White Paper.⁷ The Australian Defence Force Cadet scheme is expected in the future to help both Regular and Reserve Defence Force Recruitment and add to the pool available for raising the additional brigades.

Industrial Support for Expansion

- 4.12 In the 43 submissions received by the committee there was very little discussion of industry policy and the benefits of a close relationship between Government, Defence and local industry. The topic was similarly not discussed at length in *From Phantom to Force*. In addition, there appears to be little research conducted in the area of force expansion.
- 4.13 The recommendations proposed in *From Phantom to Force*, particularly the force expansion requirements, necessitate a change in the relationship between defence and industry. Industry will, in future, need the ability to produce defence materiel in short timeframes, and far greater liaison will need to be carried out between defence and industry in relation to specific force expansion requirements. The committee believes further work on long term partnership arrangements between Defence and industry will be required.
- 4.14 This report does not go into this topic in any depth. Suffice to say that the committee considers it an important issue that has yet to be adequately addressed. It should be noted that one of the possible topics for the committee's next report, likely in the new Parliament, is that of Defence procurement. Any study of this topic will, by necessity, study the issue of industry support for Defence in detail.

The Personnel Model

- 4.15 Recommendation 8 of *From Phantom to Force* outlined a model for a unified Army personnel structure. Feedback from individual Reservists and the

⁷ Defence White Paper, *Defence 2000: Our Future Defence Force*, Commonwealth of Australia, 2000, p. 73

Defence Reserve Association⁸ has indicated strong support for this proposal and the flexibility it offers. Cat B service⁹, with initial full time service was seen as an effective new measure which could assist in meeting training needs, assist in meeting higher readiness and aid recruiting. The personnel structure affords the opportunity for Army to harness the capability of the Army Reserve more effectively and would go a large way to eliminating any issues of 'second class citizenship.'

- 4.16 Since the release of *From Phantom to Force*, there has been a great deal of change to the Army personnel model. The Defence White Paper made a significant change to the concept of the use of Reserves when it stated that 'the role of our Reserves will undergo a major transition. Henceforth their clear priority will be to provide fully-trained personnel to our ready frontline forces deployed on operations.'¹⁰ This change was a reflection of the way the Reserves had been used over the last two or three years, where shortfalls in regular capability were made up with the use of Reserve personnel on full time duty.
- 4.17 Subsequent to this, the *Defence Legislation Amendment (Enhancement of the Reserves and Modernisation) Act 2000* was passed through Parliament. This legislation made the processes for calling out the Reserve more streamlined and provides a greater measure of employment protection for those Reservists that serve periods of full time service. The committee sees this as a major step ahead for the Army that should now enable the additional capability offered by the Reserve to be harnessed by Army.
- 4.18 As a result of these changes, the environment in which the initial recommendations were made has changed markedly. While not invalidating the committee's model, the committee does acknowledge that it moves some way away from the recommendations. The committee is not convinced, however, that the changes reflect a comprehensive review of the personnel model, and would like further information from the Department of Defence regarding the change in Reserve role, tasking and capability.

8 Held at Randwick Barracks on Saturday 21 July 2001 and attended by the Sub-Committee Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

9 Category B service is initial full-time service followed by an agreed commitment for part-time service for a set tenure. The part-time service requires regular attendance at a local unit.

10 *ibid.* pp. 81-82.

Conclusion

- 4.19 On the basis of the new evidence received, the committee accepts that it is optimistic to believe that an additional eight brigades can be raised within two years. The Army would not have the requisite personnel to train these new formations, and would be unlikely to be able to equip them adequately.
- 4.20 The committee does not believe that keeping the Army Reserve as both a provider of immediate capability and an expansion base is the key. It may appear to a detached observer that Army has merely changed a few names and maintained the status quo.
- 4.21 The committee believes, on the basis of new evidence, that it is reasonable, and more realistic, for the Army to have a capability to generate up to an additional four brigades within two years. This has been reduced from the previous recommendation of eight brigades.