

A SUBMISSION TO THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE

## Government response to the Defence Abuse Response Taskforce (DART)

I present my considered appreciation of the dealings I have had with the Defence Abuse Response Taskforce (DART) to provide an insight into what I believe are actions incompatible with a government response to former Defence Minister Smith's stated objective of uncovering abuse and attempting to hold those responsible for committing the abuse and those responsible for covering it up to account .

My dealings can be categorised under the following aspects:

- a. evasion;
- b. denial;
- c. intimidation;
- d. attempted blackmail; and
- e. abuse.

The first action is in two parts. The first issue relates to the DART interpretation of its terms of reference to attempt to exclude abuse by very senior Defence employees.

The second issue is to refuse to action in any way allegations put to the DART on the basis that some of the victims were not employees of Defence.

The third issue relates to the integrity of the DART in its understanding and competency of the DART to adequately address the issue of potential conflict of interest. This is the context of its deliberations and construction of possible causes of action relating to allegations of misfeasance in public office. This involves very senior Defence employees, and the Commonwealth of Australia by virtue of its vicarious liability for the actions of its employees. This culminated in its continual intransigence in answering a reasonable request from a person making very serious allegations.

The fourth aspect relates to the DART attempting to blackmail me into providing undefined information. This matter will be dealt with in a separate confidential submission to

The fifth issue is abuse by the DART in attempting to deny me access to all the material it holds on myself. There is an administrative access arrangement put in place by the DART to give people who have made allegations to have all material held on them made available to them upon request within 30 days of that request.

Isn't it ironic that the DART management portrays the same sociopathic tendencies as the abusers within Defence.

Finally, there is the question of the Prime Minister Abbott, the Attorney-General Brandis and the Defence Minister Johnston in their apparent support for the actions of the DART in these matters that reflects poorly on their ethics and morality when compared to the previous Defence Minister, Stephen Smith.

I raised some of these matters directly with the Prime Minister, Minister for Defence and the Attorney General to no end. It appears to me that the concept of bureaucratic defence for any senior Defence staff is not only well established but actively supported.

I am happy to provide additional material before the committee.

Yours truly,

Michael Price