

STRATEGIC POLICY AND INTELLIGENCE GROUP OVERVIEW 2015-16

The Deputy Secretary Strategic Policy and Intelligence, Ms Rebecca Skinner, is responsible for the three Defence Intelligence Agencies – the Defence Intelligence Organisation, the Australian Signals Directorate and the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation. She also has stewardship of Defence’s strategic, international and industry policy as well as an internal contestability function to ensure the capability needs of Defence are appropriately aligned with strategy and resources. Strategic Policy and Intelligence Group was established in February 2016 in response to the First Principles Review recommendation to strengthen Defence’s strategic centre. This is improving policy advice and intelligence outputs through clearer accountability, direction and contestability.

The *2016 Defence White Paper*, released in February 2016, provided substantial intelligence investments—in terms of both people and capabilities. This includes increased investment to strengthen Defence’s intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance capabilities as well as modernised, all-source intelligence systems supported by enhanced information processing capabilities.

During 2015-16, the Defence Intelligence Organisation continued to provide influential all-source intelligence assessments, in support of the Australian Defence Force and Defence policy formulation.

A joint Defence Intelligence Organisation and Australian Signals Directorate team within the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) provided specialist advice to the Government’s new national Cyber Security Strategy – a comprehensive plan for advancing Australia’s national and economic security through strong cyber security. It was released by Prime Minister Turnbull in April 2016.

The ACSC also made a significant contribution to the first unclassified *Cyber Threat Report* released in July 2015. The report provides an overarching view of cyber adversaries, what they are seeking and their methods. It includes targeted information about cyber threats, available for use by both government and industry. The *2016 Threat Report* was released in October 2016.

The Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation expanded access to Defence’s online, global high-resolution imagery service across Defence networks, including to fleet and deployed units. In particular, it facilitated humanitarian and disaster relief support provided by the Australian Defence Force after Tropical Cyclone Winston struck Fiji in February 2016.

In response to the First Principles Review, the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation has also integrated the Royal Australian Navy’s Hydrography, Meteorology and Oceanography functions to consolidate and improve the delivery of Defence’s geospatial services. The Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation also reached agreement to

consolidate specific geospatial elements into operational intelligence support units, which will be established in 2016-17.

The Defence Intelligence Agencies continued to place significant emphasis on ensuring that their activities comply with the *Intelligence Services Act 2001* and other relevant legislation. This was achieved through mandatory and comprehensive training of staff, in-house governance and regular liaison with the Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security.

The Defence Intelligence Agencies also maintained strong and effective international relationships. Defence intelligence collection and assessments are valued by Australia's international intelligence and security partners. In turn, Defence benefits from this close cooperation by drawing on the collection and assessments of our international partners.

The Defence Intelligence Agencies also reinforced their commitment to pursue innovative recruitment and retention strategies, amid increasing competition for talent. Initiatives to attract and retain skilled ADF and APS personnel include targeted university recruitment, increased flexibility and incentives for high priority technical skills.