



Submission No 4

Inquiry into Australian Defence Force Regional Air Superiority

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Name: Gordon Bradbury

The Secretary of the Committee,

My Name is Gordon Bradbury, I am a concerned taxpayer and a concerned Australian in regard to the future of Australia's Regional Air Combat ability in the wider region- both in the ability to protect Australia directly and as peacekeeping/ enforcement and as a stabilising force within the region and throughout the world.

The Men and Women of the Australian Defence Forces receive some of the worlds best training to prepare themselves for the tasks and challenges they face in peacetime and wartime. They also deserve the best equipment and more so the right equipment for the job.

The selection of the F-25 JSF- Joint Strike Fighter as the preferred aircraft for both strike and air superiority/ air dominance roles is the most obvious issue of the wrong equipment.

Within the force structure being planned having only a Tier 2 Fighter- not a top of the line Tier 1 Fighter Aircraft such as the F/A-22 is perplexing and worrying.

The wider region has seen the influx of latest Generation Western and Russian Technology airframes, missiles, and Counter Air Systems as well as Force Multipliers such as Aerial Refuelling Tankers and AWACS.

This has created an environment with which the current in line F/A-18A achieves at best parity with the threats within the region and that's with the current HUG- Hornet Upgrade and also the news in service missiles and AWACS and Tanker support.

By selecting the Tier 2 JSF as a previous government did with selecting the Tier 2 Hornet we are putting ourselves up for reduced capability and compromise in a region that is increasingly becoming harder to compete with.

The JSF is a stealthy aircraft- but isn't meant to operate alone within the US Orbat- the F/A-22 is the aircraft intended to defeat the current systems entering the region- the JSF is meant to follow on after the F/A-22's have kicked the door in as such.

A JSF can shoot down a late Gen SU30 one on one- but it's not the aircraft you would want to hunt down multiple SU-30's with that have AWACS, Tankers and High End SAM Systems with.

Given the current trend in the region and the high technology capabilities and combat power of the F/A-22 it would be foolhardy to not seriously consider the F/A-22 within the RAAF Force Structure. Nor to compare the pricing's of the F/A-22 as opposed to the JSF at intended RAAF purchase time. Even if the F/A-22 is a more expensive it offers much greater long term and combat value.

The cost of failure of losing the air battle is too great a risk not to invest in properly.

Regards,

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