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Defence Review 2000  
R-1-5-A137  
Russell Offices  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Maam,

**PROPOSAL FOR A GREATLY IMPROVED DEFENCE PERSONNEL  
STRUCTURE AT A SUSTAINABLE ANNUAL COST OF \$4 BILLION IN  
YEAR 2000 DOLLAR TERMS**

I have in recent times established a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for use in examining possible defence personnel funding possibilities and have come up with a proposal which appears to offer a significant increase in the number of defence personnel capable of helping defence and secure Australia's interests, at a cost less than we presently spend on defence personnel.

This proposal is designed to assist in the present Defence White Paper review and consultation process by offering a clear solution to the Defence personnel costs problem that has received much attention in recent times.

**The proposal**

I will outline the proposal first then offer supporting commentary. The numerical figures quoted below are based on my spreadsheet derivations and can be varied.

**Recruitment and Initial Training**

1. The following numbers would be recruited each year:

**RECRUITS**

Navy	1600
Army	4064
Air Force	1600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7264</b>

2. All recruits would undertake a 3 year operational skill acquisition program (OSAP) involving basic training and on the job training, at the conclusion of which they are fully trained to participate in operations.

3. During their OSAP, personnel would be paid as follows:

1st year	\$48,000
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2nd year	\$50,000
3rd year	\$52,000

4. It is assumed that attrition throughout the OSAP can be managed at 5%, so that, of the 7264 recruited each year, 6228 (i.e.  $7264 \times [1-5\%]^3$ ) would "graduate" at the end of the three year skill acquisition program, as follows:

#### OPERATIONALLY TRAINED PERSONNEL (OTPs)

Navy	1372
Army	3484
Air Force	1372
TOTAL	6228

5. The total numbers of personnel undertaking their OSAP (PUOSAPs) at any given time will be as follows:

PUOSAPs	Navy	Army	Air Force	TOTALS
First year starters	1600	4064	1600	7264
Second year starters	1520	3861	1520	6901
Third year starters	1444	3668	1444	6556
TOTALS	4564	11593	4564	20721
SALARY TOTALS (\$m)	227.9	578.8	227.9	1034.6

#### Careerists and Non-careerists

6. Percentages of the 6228 operationally trained graduates would be appointed to undertake careers in the permanent ADF as follows:

#### ANNUAL CAREERIST INTAKE

	percentage	number	
Navy	50	686	(note: 686 = 50% of 1372)
Army	20	697	(note: 697 = 20% of 3484)
Air Force	25	343	(note: 343 = 25% of 1372)
TOTAL		1726	

7. It is assumed that careerists' attrition can be managed at 12% and that maximum career length will be 45 years, so that, in the steady-state (assuming equal throughputs each year) the total force numbers will be as follows (calculated using the appropriate geometric progression/series – as learnt in secondary school maths):

#### TOTAL NUMBERS OF CAREERISTS

	Personnel	Salary bill (\$m)
Navy	5689	368.1
Army	5780	374.0
Air Force	2845	184.1
TOTAL	14314	926.2

8. It is assumed that careerists are to be paid a salary of \$54,000 at the start of their 4th year (immediately following their OSAP), with annual increments of \$1500

per annum (this could reflect average rates of pay), so that at the start of one's 10th year the pay would be \$63,000, at the end of their 20th year \$78,000 etc.

9. Combining the figures in paragraphs 5 and 7 gives the following size of the permanent ADF and its associated salary bill:

TOTAL PERMANENT ADF		
	Personnel	Salary bill (\$m)
Navy	10253	596.0
Army	17373	952.8
Air Force	7409	411.9
TOTAL	35035	1960.8

10. The average salary of all permanent ADF personnel works out to approximately \$56,000 (including those in their OSAP) and \$64,700 among those who have completed their OSAP.

11. Those operationally trained graduates not continuing on in the ADF as careerists would be classified as operationally trained non-careerists (OTNCs), as follows:

NON-CAREERISTS	percentage	number
Navy	50	686
Army	80	2787
Air Force	75	1029
TOTAL		4502

12. The above numbers of OTNCs would enter the pool of personnel within a refresher course of readiness (PWRCR), in which they would be paid an income of \$5000 to undertake operational readiness refresher training (ORRT) comprising a minimum of 10 days activities (with options for additional voluntary [i.e. non-paid] training/employment) carefully designed to provide updates on skills, knowledge etc., so as to maintain personnel "within a refresher course" of operational readiness (WROR).

13. It is assumed that the attrition of OTNCs from the PWRCR can be managed at 5%, and that such personnel will spend a maximum time of 20 years within the PWRCR, so that, in the steady-state (assuming equal throughputs each year) the numbers of OTNCs within the PWRCR personnel will be as follows (again calculated using the appropriate geometric progression/series):

TOTAL NUMBERS OF NON-CAREERISTS WITHIN THE PWRCR		
	Personnel	Income bill (\$m @ \$5000 per head)
Navy	7982	39.9
Army	32440	162.2
Air Force	11973	59.9
TOTAL	52395	262.0

14. It is assumed that careerists who leave after less than 19 years of completed service (starting from their first recruitment) will join the PWRCR upon their

separation from the permanent ADF and thereafter serve within the PWRCR under the same terms as the OTNCs in the PWRCR. So these careerists will undertake the same minimum of 10 days ORRT for which they will receive \$5000 per annum in return.

15. It is assumed that the attrition of ex-careerists from the PWRCR can be managed at 5% (again, the same as for OTNCs), and that such personnel will spend an amount of time within the PWRCR such that a maximum of 20 will have elapsed after their first joining date (so, for example, a careerist who leaves after 7 years in the permanent ADF can spend an additional 13 years within the COSP), so that, in the steady-state (assuming equal throughputs each year) the numbers of non-careerists within the PWRCR personnel will be as follows (again calculated using the appropriate geometric progression/series):

**TOTAL NUMBERS OF EX-CAREERISTS WITHIN THE PWRCR**

	Personnel	Income bill (\$m @ \$5000 per head)
Navy	5000	25.0
Army	5080	25.4
Air Force	2500	12.5
TOTAL	12581	62.9

16. Combining the figures in paragraphs 13 and 15 gives the following size of the PWRCR:

**TOTAL PWRCR**

	Personnel	Income bill (\$m @ \$5000 per head)
Navy	12983	64.9
Army	37520	187.6
Air Force	14474	72.4
TOTAL	64977	324.9

17. Defining capable of serving personnel (COSP) as those either in the permanent ADF or the PWRCR (hence the sum of these two pools of personnel), the total pool of COSP (PCOSP) will be as follows, taking the sums of the figures shown at paragraphs 9 and 16:

**TOTAL PCOSP**

	Personnel	Salary bill (\$m)
Navy	23236	660.9
Army	54893	1140.4
Air Force	21882	484.3
TOTAL	100011	2285.7

18. The "TOTAL" figures in paragraphs 5, 7, 13 and 15 show that the total PCOSP comprises the following breakdowns by category:

Category	Personnel	%	Salary bill (\$m)	%
PUOSAPs	20721	20.7	1034.6	45.3
CAREERISTS	14314	14.3	926.2	40.5

PWRCR	52395	52.4	262.0	11.5
NON-CAREERISTS				
PWRCR	12581	12.6	62.9	2.8
EX-CAREERISTS				
TOTAL	100011	100.0	2285.7	100.0

19. It is assumed that the ratio of "total personnel costs" to "salary costs" or the personnel to salary ratio (PSR) is 1.75, so that the total salary bills in paragraphs 17 and 18 can be converted to the following corresponding personnel bills:

#### TOTAL PCOSP

	Personnel	Personnel bill (\$m)
Navy	23236	1156.6
Army	54893	1995.8
Air Force	21882	847.6
TOTAL	100011	4000.0

Category	Personnel	%	Personnel (\$m)	%
PUOSAPs	20721	20.7	1810.6	45.3
CAREERISTS	14314	14.3	1620.8	40.5
PWRCR	52395	52.4	458.5	11.5
NON-CAREERISTS				
PWRCR	12581	12.6	110.1	2.8
EX-CAREERISTS				
TOTAL	100011	100.0	4000.0	100.0

#### Justification and Rationale

20. The scheme described above is motivated by several laws, observations, as follows:

##### The Law of Diminishing Returns

21. The application of this law to the operational capability of military personnel suggests that the greatest gains in marginal operational capability are acquired early in a military person's exposure to substantive operational capability preparation.

22. In the past and present ADF, military careers have been allowed to proceed in a slow, pedestrian manner without regard for the marginal value gains made with subsequent years of service. Many personnel remain in the ADF to the point where their operational capability reaches "saturation point", or stagnation, yet the rank-seniority-salary structure is such that personnel are paid most when their marginal increase in operational capabilities are most diminished. This is clearly a ridiculous state of affairs – one which can only be explained by the blind (and now clearly misguided) acquiescence of the legitimacy of whole of life military careers. Whole of life military careers have far too often become, in effect, glorified labour market programmes (some say, in disrespectful jest, for the "chronically institutionalised").

There is a place for a significant pool of permanent ADF careerists – as the scheme recommended above reflects, but not to the total detriment of other schemes like the PWRCR (personnel within a refresher course of readiness) scheme, which have the capacity to produce massive increases in the number of genuinely COSP (capable of serving personnel) at a fraction of the cost of permanent ADF members.

### **Family and People Friendly Careers**

23. Who hasn't met someone who has been severely affected by the demands of service life? The ADF continues to leave a path of marital and childhood destruction, and in peace time this is of course wholly a waste. The scheme proposed herein is designed to get people in to the ADF, engage them gainfully in genuinely value adding activities, then get them out again in a timely manner so as to enjoy post-military lives with their families or as they choose. This contrasts with the extraordinary amount of time wasted in present day military careers – especially at places like ADFA and other training establishments where hundreds of hours are wasted doing activities which in no way add to the operational capability of personnel (for example, excessive levels of parade drill). Guidance from Norman Dixon's famous book 'On the Psychology of Military Incompetence' is instructive here. One of Dixon's most compelling references is one to the Australian General Sir John Monash, who A.J.P. Taylor described (as reproduced on page 348 of Dixon's book) as 'the only general of creative originality produced by the First World War'. Sir John Monash did not go through a sustained process of 'education' such as that present at ADFA or RMC. Dixon (on page 348) remarks that Monash:

was lucky to have escaped the mind-blunting routinized career of a large mercenary military organization, where the real skills demanded by the complex task of generalship are gradually expunged by orthodox militarism.

### **An attrition rate of 12% is not at all high**

24. Those who cry loudest about high attrition rates are invariably more senior personnel who are perhaps at least to some extent insecure in their knowledge that they remain ever deeper with their snouts in the public trough at a time when their operational capability and capacity to substantively contribute to Australia's national security has passed its peak and is on the wane. A club-like career culture arises in which longer careers are encouraged to be seen as an impressive display of loyalty. The reality is that longer careers encourage cost-blowouts and top-heavy personnel structures, and leave (in both relative and absolute terms) too little money available to fund recruitment at level sufficient to ensure that the ADF has sufficient people in X years time as well as "right now". Efforts to encourage longer careers show reckless disregard for the massive waste implicit in such long careers. Again, there is a place for sufficient careerists, and a sufficiently large permanent ADF, to preserve a sufficient degree of stability and permanence in the military structure, but beyond such a structure, the marginal gain from excess permanently employed military personnel is minimal, and a fraction as value adding as the PWRCR pool recommended herein at many many times the cost.

25. As a further critical insight, if the 1726 annual careerist intake (of personnel who have completed their 3 year OSAP) identified in paragraph 6 were subject to a constant 12% attrition rate, then this cohort would still yield some 9 personnel reaching their 45th year of service. So in the steady-state this number would emerge each and every year, and at any given time there would be some 77 personnel with between 39 and 45 years of service, and some 602 personnel with between 27 and 45 years experience. This is easily sufficient to produce the number of admirals, generals and air marshals we need, and easily sufficient to provide a suitably competitive environment from which these senior officers can be selected.

26. The figures arising in a climate of 12% attrition as set out in the above paragraph compare favourably with the disastrous scenario that would arise if attrition was as low as say 9%, or even worse, 7%, as follows:

	12%	9%	7%
personnel reaching their 45th year	9	36	88
personnel with between 39 and 45 years service	77	278	638
personnel with between 27 and 45 years service	602	1629	3150

27. The above 9% and 7% figures are not unrealistic. The recent Auditor General's Audit Report No. 35 of 1999-2000 titled 'Retention of Military Personnel: Australian Defence Force' shows that officer separation in the ADF has in recent years been around these disastrously low levels. Numerous problems arise in such a stagnate climate of low throughput. Firstly, far too great a share of the overall personnel bill is wasted on excessive numbers of personnel who have little or no capacity to add value to Australia's defence. Secondly, the personnel structure is subjected to forces tending toward overcrowding top-heaviness. Thirdly, if such excessive numbers of very senior personnel are to be removed through redundancy packages as has occurred in recent years, it costs an absolute fortune!!

### **Great capability gains at massively reduced costs to the taxpayer**

28. My scheme recommends permanent ADF of some 35,035 personnel at total personnel cost of some \$3.43 billion per annum and an additional 64,977 PWRCR personnel at total personnel costs of just \$569 million per annum. If the average personnel costs for these 35,035 (of \$97,943) were extended (by the addition of 12,965 personnel) to a permanent ADF size of 48,000 as is presently being discussed in defence circles, then the total personnel cost of these 48,000 personnel would be some \$4.70 billion – this being some \$1.27 billion in excess of the \$3.43 billion the scheme here provides for such full-time personnel. Taking into account diminishing returns and marginal gain considerations, it is beyond doubt that the 64,977 PWRCR provided in my proposed scheme at a cost of \$569 (i.e. @ \$8,750 per head per annum) represents many times better value than would 12,965 extra permanent ADF members at a cost of \$1,270 million per annum (@ \$97,943 per head per annum)

### **Doing what smart industrial processes do**

29. The PWRCR pool recommended herein merely takes gainful use, in their post-full-time-ADF lives, of those personnel who have gained operational capability during a full-time-ADF stint. At present most ex-full-time-ADF personnel wither on

the vine in the civilian world – their capability of serving in their country's defence waning with each passing year in which they are not provided with refresher training and activities. The PWRCR exploitation recommended here is akin to the intelligent use of a by-product in an industrial process. Manufacturers and chemical plants (for example) are able to increase their overall operational efficiencies by making gainful use of waste-products arising in their various industrial processes and production stages. In an analogous manner, the PWRCR exploitation makes gainful ongoing use of those who have gained operational capabilities – in a way that attracts significant quantitative and qualitative national security benefits at an extremely low cost to the taxpayer.

### **The relative numbers in the Navy, Army and Air Force**

30. Large permanent Army and Air Forces are simply not necessary in peace time ... FULL STOP!! To believe the contrary is to be fooled. At this point let us be clear on the obvious: if Australia's shores were ever seriously threatened, there'd be several million males and a significant number of females who'd volunteer to help out. Again, to believe the contrary is to overlook the obvious. The scheme recommended herein provides an appropriate and economical balance between some 35,000 full-timers and some 65,000 post-full-timers in the PWRCR pool which provides a very large number of personnel who could contribute to the effort of preparing the even larger numbers of (perhaps millions) likely to volunteer or at any rate be called in to assist in Australia's defence in the event that we are seriously threatened by an invading force. The total of 100,000 COSP provided in this scheme gives us the kind of quantities of personnel sufficient to enable, say 20,000 personnel to act as intensive trainers (of civilian volunteers) whilst the remaining 80,000 are active in the operational defence of our country.

31. The Navy needs a relatively large permanent force because of the inherent complexity of the integrated human-technology resources known as warships. Notwithstanding this, there is clearly room for the Navy to greatly improve its contribution to Australia's defence by cycling through many more people on to its ships for shorter periods than have traditionally been spent at sea by Navy personnel.

32. The great majority of Air Force (and Navy and Army) pilots want to fly and do little else within the Air force. We should allow them to leave the air Force and fly to their hearts' content outside the ADF at the earliest opportunity after they consolidate their mastery of their aircraft. We should then bring more people through. Thousands of young people want to fly. Only palpable mismanagement could leave us short of pilots, and only gross dishonesty could have us believe that short pilot careers are anything but a good thing. For pilots, the PWRCR scheme could enable former pilots to brush up on their flying skills, receive advice on new developments, tactics, strategy etc. and undertake appropriate simulated or real exercises.

33. Army operations in general are inherently compatible with the PWRCR system.

### **Just-in-Time Management**



34. The scheme recommended here adheres to sound JIT principles though in a manner which represents a lower risk national investment in defence personnel than is presently in place. The PWRCR system is clearly consistent with JIT principles. It is also important to recognise that a move to secure a large number of personnel within a refresher course of operational capability (the PWRCR pool) should not be seen as one which produces personnel less ready for service than our present permanent ADF provides, since many permanent ADF members are presently employed doing work with little or no connection to any form of operational capability (take Navy stewards, the military band members, many *purely* clerical/administrative personnel etc.)

### Salary Cap Analogy

35. The scheme recommended herein attempts to incorporate valuable lessons available from the operation of sporting team salary caps. The analogy is clear. The *raison d'être* of both sporting teams and the ADF is to perform to maximum capacity subject to personnel cost constraints. A problem for the Australian taxpayer in recent years has been the manner in which the ADF has been allowed to let personnel cost discipline slide, albeit due to inadequate legislative provisions relating to the clear and obvious need to separate military personnel to free moneys up to fund recruitment.

36. By permitting extremely low attrition rates – especially among officers – the ADF and Defence as a whole (noting that in our system of government the buck must stop with the Minister as Executive) has carried on a practice akin to a footy team paying great slabs of a scarce salary cap to old players who are well past their most productive years – on reputation rather than performance. The ADF has for far too long spent far too much time, effort and money on ridiculous, wasteful retention schemes and far too little into its recruitment efforts. Getting large numbers of recruits in each year is utterly critical to the task of maintaining sufficient numbers of military personnel in every future year, whereas older personnel should be trained up and able to help out in the event of an invasion whether they remain in the ADF or not!! We don't know when (if ever) a country-threatening invasion will happen, but 7% attrition rates suggest that our Defence planners believe the invasion will occur right now, and that it is prepared to sacrifice our capacity to defend ourselves in the future in order to protect the invasion today. The imbalance here is potentially disastrous. The answer is to offer greatly increase pay conditions to new recruits, and whilst we are at it, let blokes wear their hair long so long as its safe, hygienic, and of sound appearance etc. So long as their training and on-the-job-training (OJT) times are well spent, personnel achieve greatest gains in operational capability in their earliest career stages, to an extent which even suggests that we should pay recruits more than more senior personnel. The scheme proposed herein recommends \$48,000 as a starting wage for new recruits, and if this has to go up, then so be it. Paying new recruits \$60,000 represents a far better return on the dollar than paying similar amounts of money to much more senior personnel who, again, would be there for us in a nation-threatening emergency whether they were full time in the ADF or enjoying their post-ADF lives. Defence is subject to conditions that differ from the ever-present demands of the healthcare system. Career doctors make much more sense than career military personnel. For defence the task is not to cultivate excessive numbers of extremely costly peace-time careers but rather, simply to generate substantive operational capabilities among as many personnel as can be managed subject to the constraints of cost and the acknowledged need for a significant

permanent ADF to act as a structural basis from which expansion can be facilitated in the event of a significant national security threat.

### **Incentives which add real value in terms of operational capability**

37. The \$5000 per annum per head to be paid to the PWRCR pool for a minimum of 10 days annual operational readiness refresher training (ORRT) is designed to be a highly lucrative incentive to attract the high retention of personnel within the PWRCR pool (consistent with the low assumed attrition rate of 5%). Think about it: \$5000 for 10 days @ say 8 hours/day amounts to \$62.50 per hour, or an equivalent of \$3500 per week. Even a pilot, for example, on \$104,000 per year (\$2000 per week) ought to be attracted to such an amount. And again, there is provision in the proposed PWRCR scheme for those who take genuine pride in their operational capability to volunteer for more than the 10 day minimum. Noting labour market realities and also noting that the operational skill/knowledge requirements of pilots differ from infantry personnel and from seagoing combatant personnel etc., the amount of this PWRCR incentive and the minimum ORRT periods could be differentiated between operational skill types to help achieve target numbers within the PWRCR pool. In view of the very high marginal gain in operational capability achieved at such very low cost through the PWRCR scheme, increasing the PWRCR/ORRT incentive above \$5000 per head per annum would represent much better value than offering similar increases to permanent ADF members ADF.

38. Notwithstanding the higher marginal gains in overall operational capability that can be achieved by offering the PWRCR/ORRT incentives as detailed above, the \$48,000, \$50,000 and \$52,000 salaries offered respectively in the first, second and third years of the in the first three years operational skill acquisition program (OSAP) represent a considerable jump above present recruitment offerings, and are designed with the intent of attracting a large number of high calibre recruits so as to help cultivate as high a quality ADF and total pool of COSP as possible. The starting salary of \$54000 for permanent ADF members starting their 4th year (following the three year OSAP) is again a significant increase above what ADF members presently receive at this early career stage. And with annual increments of \$1500, the \$63000 offered to a person (who may well be still in his/her twenties) at the start of their 10th year (hence after just nine years service) again represents an exceptionally high level of income relative to both the external labour market and present ADF levels. Such income levels are the kind of income levels which provide defence families with that little bit extra to significantly compensate for the negative impacts of military life upon families/marriages/children etc. These relatively high wages for junior personnel are prudent on sound economic (marginal gain) and operational capability grounds. An permanent (careerist) ADF member starting his/her 30th year on \$93000 (perhaps typically someone in his/her 40s or 50s) is obviously still exceptionally well paid relative to relevant external labour market and present ADF levels, hence ensuring an ADF personnel environment that is at all times subject to beneficial competitive discipline. To the Chief of the Defence Force (CDF), say, starting his/her 40th year (say) of service (at say age 60), the proposed income of \$108,000 might seem a little light on. At this point it is appropriate to note that all figures presented herein can be regarded as average income levels which do not take account of differing rates of promotions among personnel. This limitation in no way detracts from the great strengths of the substantive proposals set out, but it needs to be added

that an *average* figure of \$108,000 could be paid to personnel entering their 40th year can be maintained with the CDF receiving much more than this (with others in this 40th year cohort receiving commensurately [though only slightly] less to maintain the \$108,000 average).

### **Defence Personnel and their Families and Children all Benefit**

39. The psychology of and simple realities associated with the young adults who make up the bulk of operationally capable military personnel should never be overlooked in defence planning. Admitting generalisation, most young blokes who enter military service want their hot cars as soon as they can get one. etc. etc. The salary levels offered throughout the OSAP, and to careerists, and to those in the PWRCR pool, are high enough to allow young blokes to get their hot cars out of their system but in a way which leaves them absent of the consequential financial-personal nightmares that is the reality for so many junior ranking personnel in today's ADF. The link between financial pressure and family breakdown is of course unambiguously established, and the ultimate victims of such typical young male "car chasing" behaviour are often the spouses and children of these fellas in critical subsequent stages of childhood development. I've seen kids and adults (who were defence kids once) clearly utterly devastated by the consequences of military family "life". Only those with their heads in the sand could fail to notice this pattern of destruction. My own personnel belief is that financial and stability for families, couples and children is clearly a "public good" worth paying good money for at the best and worst of times irrespective of other factors, however "dry" (socio-politically speaking) types who would set aside such socially responsible grounds for high income levels for junior defence personnel cannot avoid the plain truth that such high initial income levels are clearly justified – indeed urgently demanded – on the economic (marginal gain) and operational capability grounds that are at the heart of the scheme proposed herein. Recruiters can't get the numbers needed at the moment. The answer is simple: PAY MORE TO GET THEM IN THE DOOR!!!

### **Steady-State Stability**

40. Keeping defence personnel numbers steady is without a doubt a golden rule for defence personnel planning, because in the absence of a reliable crystal ball we don't know whether peak demand on our defence forces will occur this year or the next or the next etc. etc. This means keeping recruitment levels constant – no ifs, no buts, no excuses. If the minister and senior Defence management are serious about national security, it is incumbent upon them to achieve recruitment targets of the kind proposed herein.

41. Maintaining defence personnel numbers at constant/stable levels through the maintenance of constant throughputs offers obvious planning benefits. Financial and general defence planning carried out on the basis of natural attrition of personnel amounts to senior defence management taking their hands off the steering wheel and just hoping that the car stays on the road. Enormously expensive redundancy payouts have become necessary in the absence of disciplined defence personnel management practices in the past and present ... unsteered cars do go off the road unfortunately!!!

### **Final Remarks**

42. Several other letters/emails related to the proposal here are supplied to accompany this proposal.

43. My own family and other commitments are such that I do not have the time I would need to improve the written and/or logical quality of this submission, though I'd of course like to.

44. It is my sincere hope that in examining this proposal you treat it on its merits, focus on the substantive ideas presented, "keep your eyes on the main game" of national security maximisation, and do not become distracted by brainwashed dogma of the kind that tends to attract itself to military-related circles and debates.

45. I have two university medals (in maths and mechanical engineering) and have achieved high distinction grades in theses I have submitted in maths (on optical waveguide theory), engineering (on aircraft noise) and public policy and management (on comparative federalism). I got on extremely well in a mutual respect sense with most sailors in my 14 year Navy career and have worked extremely hard to get into a position where I can offer excellent solutions to problems such as we are facing here in relation to Defence funding and I urge you, as entrusted agents of the Australian people, to fulfil your duty to the Australian people and take my ideas seriously for the benefit of the Australian people whose taxes must pay for life-and-death gravity healthcare services (for example) as well as for national security services.

Yours faithfully,

Mark Drummond  
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