



Defence Statement for Northern Australia

A strong north, makes for a more secure Australia

Publication date: November 2018 on northernaustralia.gov.au

Ministers:

- Minister for Resources and Northern Australia, Senator the Hon Matthew Canavan
- Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Senator the Hon Nigel Scullion
- Queensland Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, the Hon Jacqui Trad MP
- Northern Territory Minister for Tourism and Culture and Corporate and Information Services, the Hon Lauren Moss MLA (on behalf of the Chief Minister)
- Western Australia Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Minister assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade, Parliamentary Secretary, the Hon Darren West MLC (on behalf of Minister MacTiernan)

Defence Statement

1. Northern Australia is strategically important to the security of Australia and has long played a critical role in maintaining our sovereign borders, supporting a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific and deploying humanitarian assistance. Proximity to the Indo-Pacific region makes northern Australia a focal point for Australia's national security, including energy, resources, maritime, biosecurity, economic and trade, immigration, and border control.
2. Northern Australia has a long and proud history in working with and supporting the defence presence and activities in northern Australia and beyond our borders. Defence is part of the fabric of our communities and our industries. We want defence families (serving and ex-serving) to have the confidence that their partners and children can come to the north with quality education and health services and fulfilling, well-remunerated jobs.
3. A strong northern economy is fundamental to the ability of northern Australia to build its capacity and capability to support Defence. Northern Australian industries are a fundamental input to Defence's capability through construction and the provision of maintenance and support services. Indigenous people and businesses play a key role in building the capacity and capability of our Defence industry across the north.
4. Defence is making infrastructure-related investments of approximately \$28 billion over the next two decades in northern Australia. We recognise the efforts of Defence through the pilot Local Industry Capability Plans (LICP) to increase opportunities for local northern Australia businesses. We are committed to working with the Department of Defence and industry to move LICPs from pilot to policy and to identify other measures. This includes our commitment to building the skills of the local workforce and using government procurement processes to maximise 'buy local'.
5. Engaging the Department of Defence on long-term planning in northern Australia will ensure future Defence needs are factored into infrastructure (e.g. road, maritime infrastructure, rail and digital infrastructure), industry and workforce development plans.
6. An ongoing strategic dialogue between the Department of Defence and northern Australian jurisdictions, to better understand Defence's investment priorities and plans, and future industry and workforce needs. This will build the cap