

Section 7. Australia

1. General Situation

Australia shares basic values with Japan such as respect for freedom and human rights, and democracy, and is allied with the United States as are Japan and the Republic of Korea. Although the main focus is on neighboring regions such as Timor-Leste and the Solomon Islands, Australia has been broadly and actively involved in resolving international security issues such as the problem in Afghanistan.

2. Security and National Defense Policy

In May 2009, Australia released the defense white paper titled “Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030”²⁷⁷ for the first time in the nine years since 2000, which presented national defense policies for the period through to 2030, based on a strategic outlook for the future. The white paper states that Australia has strategic interests in (1) the defense of Australia against direct armed attack; (2) the security, stability and cohesion of the immediate neighborhood, which Australia shares with Indonesia, New Zealand, and other countries; (3) the stability of the wider Asia-Pacific region, which stretches from North Asia to the Eastern Indian Ocean; and (4) preserving an international order that restrains aggression by states against each other, and can effectively manage other risks and threats, such as the proliferation of WMD, terrorism, state fragility and failure, intra-state conflict, and the security impacts of climate change and resource scarcity.

It is stated that the defense policy should be founded on the principle of self-reliance in direct defense and in relation to the country’s unique strategic interests, but with a capacity to do more when required, consistent with those strategic interests that Australia might share with others, and within the limits of its resources. This defense policy means that Australia must have the military capacity to (1) act independently where Australia has unique strategic interests at stake, and in relation to which it would not wish to be reliant on the combat forces of any foreign power; (2) lead military coalitions where Australia has shared strategic interests at stake with others, and in relation to which it would be willing to accept a leadership role; and (3) make tailored contributions to military coalitions where Australia shares wider strategic interests with others and is willing to accept a share of the burden in securing those interests.

It then gives priorities to the tasks of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) as follows: (1) to deter and defeat attacks on Australia by conducting independent military operations without relying on the combat or combat support forces of other countries; (2) to contribute to stability and security in the South Pacific and Timor-Leste; (3) to contribute to military contingencies in the Asia-Pacific region; and (4) to contribute to military contingencies in the rest of the world.

In order to carry out these tasks, the ADF will need to be more potent in certain areas, particularly undersea warfare and anti-submarine warfare (ASW), surface maritime warfare, air superiority, strategic strike, special forces, intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR), and cyber warfare. Specifically, Australia intends to acquire 12 new future submarines, three new air warfare destroyers (AWD)²⁷⁸, around 100 F-35 Joint Strike Fighters (JSF) and maritime-based land-attack cruise missiles. The Government is committed to 3 percent real growth in the defense budget for 2017–2018 and 2.2 percent real growth to 2030.

3. Relationship with Other Countries

Australia attaches importance to its alliance with the United States and intends to strengthen cooperation through security policies with neighboring countries in order to maintain the stability of the region²⁷⁹.

1. Relations with the United States

Australia recognizes that the strategic stability of the Asia-Pacific region relies significantly on the presence of the United States, and emphasizes the importance of its alliance with the United States based on the Security Treaty between Australia, New Zealand and the United States of America (ANZUS Treaty)²⁸⁰. Australia holds the annual Australia–U.S. Ministerial Consultations (AUSMIN), a cabinet level meeting of foreign and defense ministers. In addition to the annual consultations, Australia stresses the importance of the alliance as a reason for the Australian military’s activities in Afghanistan. The close alliance is being maintained by taking part in the review process and consultations of U.S. strategy regarding Afghanistan and Pakistan, and repeated discussions in contribution to the preparation of the Quadrennial Defense Review. Further, Australia carries out the joint training exercise “Talisman Saber”²⁸¹ with the United States, and making efforts to improve interoperability for cooperation on humanitarian aid and disaster relief missions²⁸². In addition to declaring participation in the U.S. lead F-35 Joint Strike Fighter project, Australia intends to cooperate in missile defense²⁸³. Further, they are promoting cooperation in intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR), military satellite communications, information, and cyber security.



A scene from the Australia–U.S. joint exercise Talisman Saber 09
[Department of Defense, United States]

2. Relations with China

Australia understands that China possesses strategic influence that extends beyond East Asia, and that U.S.–China relations are the most important factor for strategic stability in the Asia Pacific region²⁸⁴. Australia understands that China’s increased defense spending due to economic growth, if not explained, has the potential to give its neighbors cause for concern²⁸⁵, and China is facing pressure for transparency. With this understanding, Australia is carrying out Australia–China Strategic Defense Dialogues regularly²⁸⁶ to further mutual understanding and cooperation in common areas of interest²⁸⁷. Further, exchanges are being carried out²⁸⁸ to develop Australia–China defense relations including joint search and rescue training in addition to mutual port visits by warships²⁸⁹.

3. Relations with Southeast Asian countries

Australia emphasizes cooperation with the various countries of Southeast Asia to fight terrorism and crime in the region, and engages in security related cooperation with Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, and Brunei²⁹⁰.

Australia sees Indonesia as having the most important defense relations in neighboring regions²⁹¹. Given the terrorist bombings in Bali in 2002 and 2005 and the terrorist bombing in front of the Australian Embassy in Jakarta in September 2004, Australia has deepened counter-terrorism cooperation²⁹² and the two countries concluded a framework agreement regarding security cooperation which described cooperation across a wide range of defense relationships in November 2006²⁹³. Also, in January 2009, the two countries signed the Australia Indonesia Joint Statement on Defence Cooperation which focuses on counter-terrorism, maritime security, intelligence, humanitarian aid, disaster relief, and peacekeeping. Australia is also carrying out comprehensive joint exercises with Malaysia and Singapore²⁹⁴ regarding non-traditional threats such as terrorism and maritime

safety under the Five Power Defence Arrangements framework²⁹⁵.

4. Overseas Activities

Australia identifies the security, stability, and cohesion of the neighboring region as one of its strategic interests; fragile states in the neighboring region are potential havens for criminals and terrorists, and domestic conflicts would inflict considerable damage on the regional community, including Australia. Thus, Australia is committed to contributing to regional stability by providing active support, including the deployment of military forces²⁹⁶.

If the Australian government decides that it is in Australia's wider strategic interests to undertake operations in the Middle East or other remote regions, Australia would do so only after the Government has satisfied itself that its forces have the necessary environment to ensure the success of the operations with minimum risk to the deployed forces²⁹⁷.

Based on this policy, Australia is deploying about 3,000 personnel abroad out of its 55,000-strong force²⁹⁸ mainly in the following areas.

(See Fig. I-2-7-1)

1. Timor-Leste

Australia has actively supported the political and social stability of Timor-Leste since 1999, when the independence movement gained momentum there. The ADF leads the International Stabilisation Force (ISF), and about 400 troops are working with about 150 New Zealand troops²⁹⁹.

2. Solomon Islands

Australia has actively supported the stability and development of the Solomon Islands since ethnic disputes intensified there in the late 1990s. The operation has been led by the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) since July 2003³⁰⁰. About 80 ADF troops comprise the military component of RAMSI together with the forces of

Fig. I-2-7-1 Overseas Deployment of ADF

(As of May 2010)

Afghanistan (inside Afghanistan)		Approx. 1,550
Afghanistan (outside Afghanistan)		Approx. 800
Iraq		Approx. 80
Timor-Leste		Approx. 400
Solomon Islands		Approx. 80
MFO	Multinational Force and Observers	Approx. 25
UNMIS	UN Mission in Sudan	17
UNTSO	UN Truce Supervision Organization	11
UNMIT	UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste	4
UNAMID	UN/AU Mission in Darfur	8
UNAMA	UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan	1
UNAMI	UN Assistance Mission for Iraq	2
Total		Approx. 3,000

Source: The website of the Department of Defence of Australia.



An Australian soldier in action in Afghanistan [Ministry of Defence, Australia]

New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and Tonga, and engage in providing security for RAMSI's multinational Participation Police Force.

3. Afghanistan

Australia announced its support for the United States immediately after the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001 under the U.S.–Australia alliance, and dispatched its troops to Afghanistan in October 2001. Australia is participating as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) with the aim to prevent the proliferation of terrorism and to prevent Afghanistan from once again becoming a safe haven for terrorists by providing support to enable Afghanistan to become a peaceful and stable country. The country has expressed a commitment to maintain the Australian military presence in Afghanistan³⁰¹. Additional units were deployed in July 2009³⁰², and currently an approximate 1,550 troops are engaged in reconstruction support activities in Uruzgan Province and the training of Afghan security forces. Further, approximately an additional 800 troops are operating around the region in support of the Afghanistan mission³⁰³.