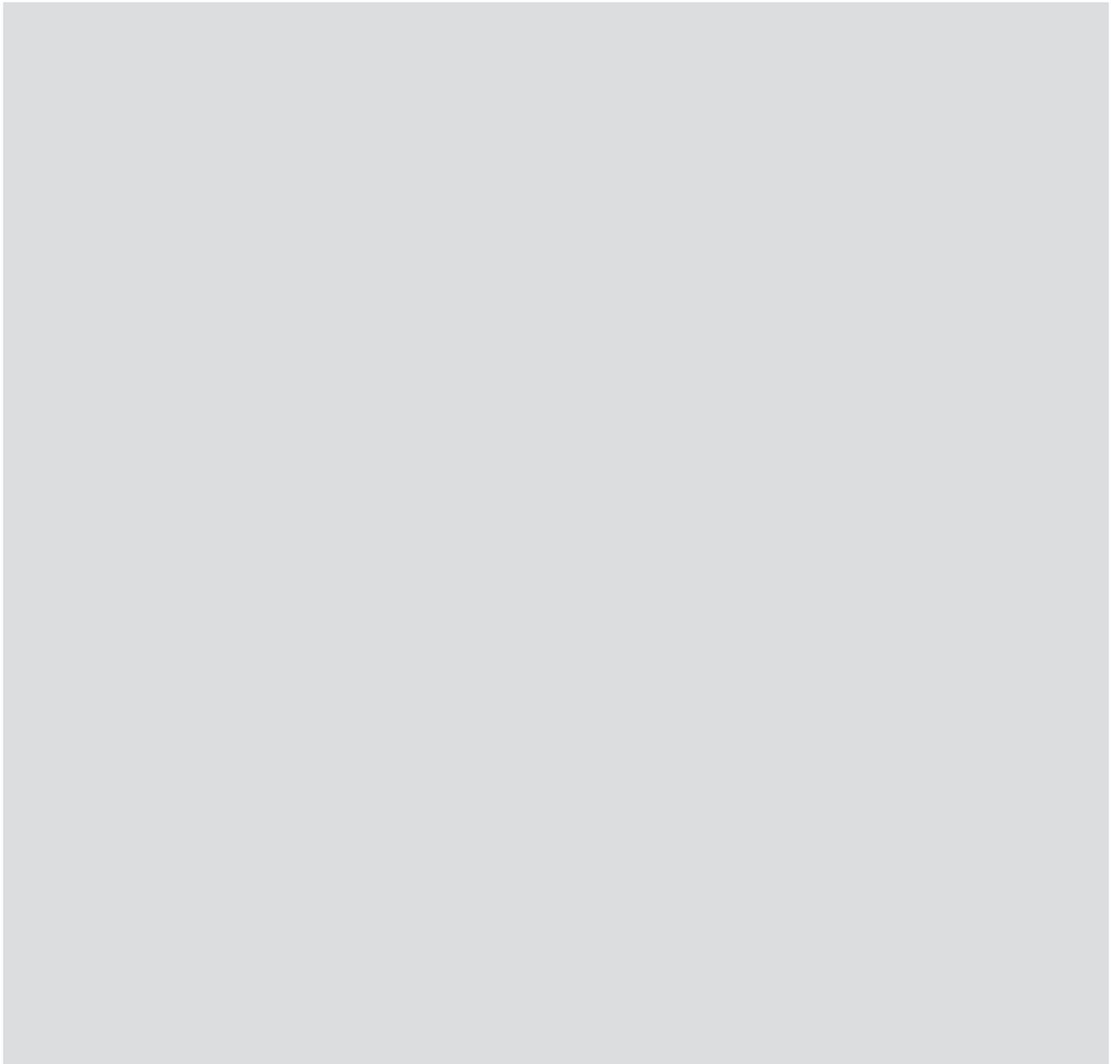




National Platform



Chapter 11: Australia's place in a changing world

Introduction

- 1 Labor will ensure that Australia can hold its head high as a proud member of the international community.
- 2 We are a middle power with regional and global interests, the 13th largest economy in the world, a member of the G20 and a founding member of the United Nations. We are a significant player in our region and constructive actor globally.
- 3 Labor seeks to expand Australia's influence and standing, guided by its values to enhance economic outcomes and security of the Australian people.
- 4 Under Labor, Australia will work through international economic forums to create a more stable global financial system and international trading regime.

Labor values

- 5 Australian Labor does not believe that the notion of a fair go stops at our continental shelf. The same values that drive our actions at home should guide our actions abroad. Labor ensures that Australian efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation, address climate change and engage effectively to reduce poverty get measurable results.
- 6 Labor ensures Australia's interests are served by strengthening our alliance with the United States, deeply engaging with our region and providing active leadership in international forums. Labor works to find solutions to the challenges that the international community faces.
- 7 Labor believes we can build a more secure Australia by supporting our security, intelligence, law enforcement and emergency management agencies, as well as promoting an international environment that is stable, peaceful and prosperous.
- 8 Labor believes that observing human rights and civil liberties is central to the continued strength of our democracy. Labor will have regard to those rights when taking action to safe-guard the security of our country in order to ensure that those rights are not unnecessarily infringed. Labor will also monitor and review the implementation of laws relating to national security to ensure that human rights and civil liberties are not unnecessarily infringed.
- 9 Labor believes in building community resilience — whether in the face of natural disasters, violent extremism or economic uncertainty — is vital to our domestic and international security interests.
- 10 We do what we say. We do our fair share. And we will continue to shape an Australia engaged with the world that Australians can be proud of.

Labor achievements

Foreign affairs

We have:

- led the call for strong action to assist the people of Libya and protect them from attack by the Qaddafi regime
- launched the China 2.0 initiative, identifying the opportunities for Australia in China's economic development and programs to promote peace and friendship
- shaped a new regional architecture to strengthen Australia's security and prosperity and the security and prosperity of the east Asian peoples through the expansion of the East Asia Summit to include the US and Russia
- established, with Japan, the ten-nation Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative to make practical progress towards a nuclear free world
- played a prominent role in promoting human rights and development in Burma — Australia is the second largest donor to Burma
- appointed Australia's first Global Ambassador for Women and Girls to give added direction and focus to women's issues globally
- implemented passport reforms to make it easier for sex and gender diverse people to get a passport in their preferred gender
- made aid effectiveness the cornerstone of Australia's aid program
- responded quickly to the crisis in the Horn of Africa, providing over \$88 million through UN agencies and Australian NGOs. Australia is the third largest donor and has been recognised by key international stakeholders as a global leader in this response.

Defence

We have:

- ended a decade-long gap in strategic analysis and defence reform to create a smarter, stronger, and more adaptable Defence organisation that can defend Australia, our people, and our interests, in today's rapidly evolving world
- released — in May 2009 — the most comprehensive Defence White Paper ever produced by an Australian Government
- continued to improve the capability of the ADF through a comprehensive equipment modernisation program
- continued to upgrade or replace up to 85 per cent of ADF equipment — increasing defence capability and creating thousands of skilled Australian jobs
- approved around \$8 billion in investment in major Defence equipment. Since September 2010, the government has approved almost \$5 billion more of new projects, including new naval combat helicopters, 100 extra Bushmaster vehicles, a fifth C-17 heavy lift aircraft and a new amphibious vessel to ensure the ADF can continue to respond to operations including humanitarian assistance and disaster relief at home and abroad
- ensured that, under Labor, Australian industry currently provides about \$5.5 billion in defence industry work every year, increasing to about \$7.5 billion over the next ten years. This means more jobs, on top of the nearly 30,000 workers already employed in Australian Defence Industries
- worked to build defence industry skills — Labor is strengthening Australian Industry Capability Plans to increase opportunities for local suppliers; supporting the Skilling Australia's Defence Industry program that has already funded more than 24,000 training places including 2200 apprentices in defence industry and manufacturing; and setting up the Defence Engineering Internship Program — encouraging engineering students to work in the Australian Defence Industry

- implemented a range of reforms — relating to Defence procurement, budget and accountability — to improve accountability in Defence, to enhance efficient delivery of value for money equipment when it is needed and ensure better Budget and financial arrangements in Defence
- withdrawn Australian combat forces from Iraq in July 2009. From 2003, approximately 20,000 ADF personnel served in Iraq with professionalism and dedication
- remained — together with 48 other countries — committed to playing our part in the UN-mandated mission in Afghanistan to transition responsibility to Afghan authorities by 2014
- enhanced transparency in relation to our operations in Afghanistan, with regular Prime Ministerial and Ministerial reports to Parliament including on detainee management
- committed \$1.6 billion for additional force protection measures for our troops in Afghanistan, including new combat body armour, upgraded vehicles and enhanced mine and IED detection equipment
- significantly upgraded our cyber security capabilities in Defence, with the opening of the Cyber Security Operations Centre in the Defence Signals Directorate. A recently commissioned Cyber White Paper to help ensure Australians can connect to the internet with confidence. Cyber security has been added to our ANZUS Alliance commitments
- continued to support wounded soldiers, introducing the Simpson program, a new program of enhanced services and support for wounded ADF members
- commissioned the first review in several decades into whether the ADF is correctly geographically positioned to meet Australia's modern and future strategic and security challenges
- formally agreed to the removal of gender restrictions from ADF combat roles. Women will now be able to work in any position in the ADF, including combat roles, provided they have the ability to meet all of the demands of the role
- commemorated the sacrifice and commitment of our veterans: including a \$8m additional annual funding to the Australian War Memorial, \$3.3m for the Vietnam Veteran Education Centre in Washington and a new program to maintain all graves of Victoria Cross, its equivalent civil award, the Cross of Valour, and the predecessor of the Cross of Valour, the George Cross recipients.
- implemented a \$30 million Pharmaceutical Reimbursement Scheme for veterans with qualifying service and accepted disabilities and a \$152.7 million Coordinated Veterans' Care Program providing care to eligible Gold Card holders who have chronic conditions, complex care needs and are at risk of an unplanned hospitalisation
- introduced fairer indexation for all veterans' compensation and war widows' pensions and implemented a new \$20 million Prisoner of War Recognition payment.

National security

We have:

- implemented legislation to enhance cooperation, assistance and information sharing between security, intelligence and law enforcement agencies
- established the Counter-Terrorism Control Centre in ASIO to strengthen the coordination of Australia's counter-terrorism intelligence efforts
- passed anti-people smuggling legislation to strengthen our border protection regime, including enabling ASIO to carry out its intelligence functions in relation to people smuggling and other serious border security threats
- confronted the growing cyber threat by establishing the Cyber Security Operations Centre, CERT Australia and a dedicated Cyber Investigations Unit within ASIO to address cyber security threats
- invested nearly \$10 million to implement programs and strategies to enhance social cohesion and resilience in order to lessen the appeal of extremist ideologies that fuel terrorism
- shown leadership on national disaster management by establishing the National Crisis Coordination Centre to drive Commonwealth involvement in national crises and investing over \$26 million to set up Australia's national telephone-based emergency warning system, Emergency Alert.

Labor priorities

- 11 Labor has built a Foreign Affairs and National Security policy that:
- advances our national security and integrity as a sovereign nation
 - protects Australians and Australia's economic interests abroad
 - contributes to a stable and just international order
 - places the highest priority on assisting Australians abroad
 - encompasses both man-made and natural threats or 'all-hazards'
 - balances strong security measures with the protection of individual rights and freedoms.
- 12 Labor achieves this through:
- our alliance with the US
 - comprehensive engagement with Asia
 - our engagement with key global and regional institutions, including the UN, the G20 and the East Asian Summit
 - strengthening Australia's partnerships with key global and regional players
 - contributing our fair share to the global fight against poverty
 - domestic national security strategies.

Maintaining our national security

- 13 The most fundamental obligation of government is to protect the nation's territorial integrity and the security of its people.
- 14 Australia's region faces real security challenges. Changing power realities are challenging traditional security settings. Unresolved territorial disputes give rise to potential flashpoints in the region. And growing military capability in Asia is increasing the potential cost of regional disputes.
- 15 Recent unprecedented natural disasters across Australia and in our region have also starkly illustrated the potential impact of climate change on our communities.
- 16 Labor's 'all-hazards' approach to national security recognises that the safety and security of Australians and our economic and social wellbeing is more than just addressing the threat of war and terrorism — it also encompasses natural disaster management, strong borders and combating serious and organised crime.
- 17 With Australian families, businesses and government conducting more and more activities online, cybercrime has already overtaken the drug trade as the most profitable form of crime in the world. Addressing this requires modern domestic laws and a consistent international framework that deals with the global nature of cybercrime by supporting cooperation between jurisdictions. Labor will accede to the world's leading cybercrime convention, developed by the Council of Europe. Accession will update Australia's domestic legislation and will enable enhanced cooperation with our allies on cyber issues.
- 18 Labor's response to the security challenges in our region is multifaceted. Labor strongly supports the US Alliance and continued US military engagement in the region, which has provided the bedrock of regional stability for decades.
- 19 Labor also supports security in the region by fostering strong ties with our Asian neighbours. Labor sees our partnerships in Asia as vital tools for encouraging stability in the region.

- 20 Labor works to strengthen regional institutions so that they can deal with the evolving realities of the region. The expansion of the EAS to include the US and Russia ensures that all of the key players can meet at summit level to discuss the range of challenges facing the region. A result of Australian diplomacy, the expansion of the EAS delivers the key features of an Asia-Pacific community. Labor also seeks to use traditional institutions including the Commonwealth to address the global challenges of the future.
- 21 Labor's long history of creative diplomacy has demonstrated that, with the right leadership, Australia can play a real role in settling regional disputes. Labor administrations played key roles in the implementation of the Cambodian peace plan and the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone. Labor continues in the tradition of active diplomacy to strengthen regional security.
- 22 Labor is equally committed to tackling global security challenges posed by terrorism and the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.
- 23 Labor supports Australia's engagement with partners to prevent Afghanistan from ever becoming a safe haven for terrorists again. This requires both a military commitment and an effort to ensure that Afghans see real improvements in their livelihoods.
- 24 Labor also supports Australia's engagement with Indonesia and other regional states on counter-terrorism. Labor believes that an effective strategy for combating terrorism involves promoting justice, genuine peace and development, as well as confronting those factors that make it easier for terrorist organisations to recruit within the region. Access to education is a key factor in making communities resistant to terrorist organisations.
- 25 Labor has renewed Australia's efforts towards ridding the world of nuclear weapons.
- 26 Labor welcomed the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament and the important contribution made by the Commission's report in informing debate and outcomes of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Labor also supports the ten-nation Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative set up by Australia and Japan to advance these outcomes in practical ways.
- 27 Labor will actively encourage the pursuit of further substantial reductions of nuclear arsenals and the development of processes, including examining the need for a nuclear weapons convention, for bringing all nuclear armed states into the disarmament process.
- 28 Labor is also committed to strengthening the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency and compliance with the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (including universalisation of the Additional Protocol), and other nuclear treaties and agreements. Labor's nuclear disarmament agenda also includes support for "no first use" obligations, deep, verifiable, and irreversible cuts in all categories of nuclear weapons and a continuing reduction of their roles in national security policies.
- 29 Labor affirms its unequivocal commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons. Labor will continue its support for nuclear weapon free zones.

Protecting Australia's economic interests abroad

- 30 Labor understands that contemporary security challenges involve multi-agency and organisation responses and coordination. Labor will, therefore, continue to develop and enhance the world leading multi-agency Civil-Military cooperation capability established by the Labor government. This will include streamlining key agency input and administration such as examining the relationship between the Civil-Military Centre, the ADF Peace Operations Training Centre and the Australian Civilian Corps.

- 31 Labor will ensure Australian foreign policy is deeply engaged with the Australian business community and the task of winning a stronger economic future for Australia.
- 32 Labor will continue to drive initiatives like Australia–China 2.0 so that government remains on the cutting edge of innovation that supports Australian business to win new markets and strengthen existing partnerships.
- 33 Labor also knows it is the government’s responsibility to influence international decision-makers as Australia manages the ongoing turbulence in the global economy. Labor is committed to deep engagement with the region and strengthened regional institutions that advance Australia’s security and economic interests.
- 34 Labor believes the G20 represents the best combination of global legitimacy and global effectiveness to deal with these challenges. Labor believes Australia, along with all governments of the G20, has a collective interest in sustaining the legitimacy, credibility and effectiveness of the G20 into the future.
- 35 Labor knows Australia’s economic engagement spans the globe. But our trading interests are closest with the Asia–Pacific region. Over 70 per cent of our trade is with the member economies of APEC. Our top three merchandise export markets are Japan, China and the Republic of Korea. India is our fastest growing major export market. Our two-way trade with Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore is worth over \$40 billion.
- 36 Labor believes it is crucial that the Asia–Pacific region remains open to trade and investment. Australia needs open, inclusive regional institutions. And we need to ensure that bilateral and regional free trade agreements support the rules-based trade system of the WTO. The region’s economic importance to the world continues to grow.

A stable and just international order

- 37 As a middle power, located in a rapidly developing region and distant from traditional sources of global power, Australia has much to gain from a global rules-based order. We benefit from an international system that is fair, just and based on law.
- 38 Labor seeks to maintain and enhance this international order through support for democracy, human rights, development and international law. In a world of mutual obligation, we cannot expect the international system to protect our interests if Australia does not do its own fair share to support the global order.

Democracy

- 39 Labor supports democracy globally and is committed to reducing the global democratic deficit. The universal aspiration of people to have the government of their choice has been underlined by the developments of the Arab spring.
- 40 Labor supports the rights of all peoples to have a legitimate voice in their government.
- 41 Labor supports the process of democratic transition including through electoral assistance and other programs to assist countries to build their democratic capacity.
- 42 Labor believes that a free press is an essential part of a democratic society and is committed to promoting media freedoms globally and the protection of the rights of journalists.

Human rights

- 43 Labor believes the promotion and protection of human rights at home and abroad is vital to achieve a peaceful and secure world where people can live in freedom and dignity. Labor considers the promotion of universal human rights to be a core foreign policy objective and that our diplomatic and economic goals must be consistent with that objective.
- 44 Labor believes all states have a duty to protect and promote universal human rights. Labor believes that domestic peace and stability, which stem from respect for human rights, contributes to international security. Effective human rights diplomacy supports international and regional security and is in Australia's national interest.
- 45 Under Labor, Australia is forthright in raising concerns over human rights violations abroad, including through bilateral representations and formal bilateral human rights dialogues with China, Vietnam and Laos. Labor notes the detention of peaceful dissidents is a significant impediment to the realisation of human rights and will be a focus of such representations and dialogues.
- 46 Labor is gravely concerned about the continuing human rights abuses in North Korea. The North Korean regime is one of the most repressive in the world with a horrific record of human rights abuses. Regrettably, there is little room for optimism that the humanitarian and human rights situation in North Korea will improve in the near future.
- 47 Labor deplores the continued denial of democratic process in Burma and the well-documented human rights abuses that have caused so many citizens to leave Burma. Labor strongly supports efforts by the United Nations for a political solution in Burma that will end years of suffering, denial and decline.
- 48 Beyond the Asia-Pacific region, Labor is concerned about human rights violations wherever they occur and will continue to raise human rights concerns with the governments concerned. In particular, Labor is very concerned about ongoing and systematic human rights abuses which continue to occur in Zimbabwe, the Sudan, Iran and Western Sahara.
- 49 Support for universal human rights and democratic processes will continue to be an integral part of Australia's engagement with Indonesia. In the context of a broadly based and multifaceted relationship, Australia will maintain contact with all elements of the political process in Indonesia and our dialogue will give expression to the Australian people's fundamental concern with human rights and democratic freedoms. Labor strongly supports the full implementation of the Special Autonomy Act of 2001 for West Papua.
- 50 Labor is strongly committed to promoting universal adherence to and implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other key human rights instruments. Labor considers that human rights do not exist in a hierarchy and will strive to ensure that all human rights instruments ratified by Australia are observed in domestic law.
- 51 Under Labor, Australia is an active partner in support of UN efforts to promote and protect human rights, and in the development of robust and independent national human rights institutions across the world. Labor will be forthright in raising concerns over human rights violations with relevant governments and organisations in our region and beyond.
- 52 Labor is determined to further strengthen international mechanisms and processes for monitoring human rights violations and to encourage the development of regional dialogue on human rights issues in the Asia-Pacific region.

- 53 Under Labor, Australia will support the Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in Relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, and will continue to sponsor and promote resolutions in support of the implementation of human rights protections for lesbians and gay men and bisexual and transgender and intersex people at the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations. Australia under Labor will actively encourage the repeal of anti-gay laws, especially criminal laws against homosexual sexual conduct, and most urgently against such laws where they impose the death penalty, and generally to encourage steps to implement the actions required by the Yogyakarta Principles. Labor in government will continue to work strategically to support international civil society organisations promoting LGBTI human rights.
- 54 Where appropriate, Labor recognises that the imposition of targeted sanctions against governments that violate human rights may be required. Such sanctions will not be to the detriment of the general population of the country in respect of which sanctions are imposed.
- 55 Labor supports the development of initiatives to advance the rights of Indigenous peoples internationally and address Indigenous disadvantage, including through its support for the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- 56 Labor is also committed to sharing Australia's own experiences of reconciliation, including the National Apology, and strongly supports efforts to increase Indigenous participation in UN fora, including through contributions to the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations.
- 57 Labor believes in gender equality and the empowerment of women. Under Labor, Australia has appointed its first Global Ambassador for Women and Girls to give added direction and focus to women's issues globally.
- 58 Labor abhors the increasing levels of repression against women in some countries. Labor will vigorously support international campaigns to end:
- sexual exploitation of women and children, including sex tourism and trafficking
 - prohibitions on education and paid employment and restriction to access to medical services for women
 - the denial of equal property rights for women
 - the unequal standing of women in judicial and political systems
 - the persecution of rape victims
 - the systematic use of rape and sexual torture in war.
- 59 Labor will work to extend the White Ribbon Day campaign to Australia's Pacific neighbours to further our efforts to stop violence against women.
- 60 Labor is strongly opposed to the incidence of forced labour and is committed to actively campaigning against forced labour and for the rights of people in situations of forced labour through international forums, multilateral and bilateral frameworks and its relationships with other countries. Labor also commits to providing every possible support and assistance for people in situations of forced labour both in Australia and internationally.
- 61 Labor will appoint a Global Ambassador for People Trafficking Issues to give greater coordination and focus to Australia's efforts to take action against people trafficking.
- 62 Labor is committed to promoting and protecting the rights of persons living with disability, including by Australia's adherence to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Labor is strengthening opportunities for people with disability in the Asia-Pacific region and globally through its support for a disability-inclusive aid program.

- 63 Labor is universally opposed to capital punishment. Under Labor, Australia will strongly and clearly state its opposition to the death penalty, whenever and wherever it arises and advocate its universal abolition, including through global representations.
- 64 Labor will actively campaign to focus world attention on governments that persist with forms of repression against the development of free trade unionism. Labor reaffirms that issues of core labour standards relate to fundamental human rights and will pursue, as appropriate, through international treaties, guaranteed respect for those rights. Labor reaffirms its support for programs designed to address abuse of labour rights in the Asia-Pacific region through support to neighbouring countries for the development of national labour legislation, helping partner countries to ratify ILO conventions, and regional trade union cooperation. Labor will restore and strengthen Australia's participation and support for these vital activities. Labor will also give high priority to supporting international efforts to eradicate the exploitation of child labour.
- 65 Under Labor, Australia is playing an active role in encouraging Australian companies operating overseas to observe international human rights standards, including core labour standards, and to ensure that their operations do not directly or indirectly violate human rights or inflict unacceptable impacts on local communities and the environment.
- 66 Labor will actively campaign to focus world attention on governments that persist with forms of repression against the development of free trade unionism.
- 67 Labor will work with Australian trade unions to build the capacity of trade unions in developing countries through a development assistance and training package, to complement Australia's foreign policy and official development assistance goals.
- 68 Labor recognises the impact of asbestos on the health of those who are exposed to it and the legacy that it will leave, particularly on vulnerable people in the developing world where asbestos is still used. Labor will lead international calls for a global treaty to ban the use of and trade in asbestos and will lead diplomatic efforts on this front including convening a Global Alliance against the Asbestos Hazard Conference in Australia.
- 69 Labor will ensure that Certificates of No Impediment to Marriage are issued regardless of sex or gender of either member of the couple.

International law

- 70 Labor believes that reform of the United Nations and the United Nations Security Council is essential to ensure that the UN can effectively respond to international challenges.
- 71 Labor believes a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council is firmly in Australia's national interest. A seat on the UN Security Council will enable Australia to exercise influence on decisions that affect the safety of our troops and peacekeepers abroad, including in Afghanistan and Timor Leste. It will enable Australia to influence action on threats to our international security, including against proliferators such as Iran and North Korea, and enable Australia to contribute more effectively to action against international terrorism.
- 72 Labor supports strengthening the UN's capacity in the fields of preventive diplomacy and peace building, peacemaking, peace keeping and peace enforcement in recognition of the significant threats to international security that arise both from longstanding and new conflicts between and within states. Therefore Labor strongly supports the UN Security Council's adoption of the doctrine of international humanitarian intervention known as 'The Responsibility to Protect'.

Strengthening our engagement with the countries of the world

- 73 Labor supports the work and role of the International Criminal Court as a key part of Australia's ongoing commitment to international criminal justice.
- 74 Labor is committed to strengthening Australia's ties with the countries of the world. As a nation with a large immigrant population, global interests, and cultural ties to every corner of the globe, we have much to gain from building our bilateral relationships.
- 75 The US remains our closest security ally and a vital global partner. Labor is firmly committed to maintaining and strengthening Australia's close relationship with the US, a relationship founded on our people's common democratic values and their commitment to fostering international peace and security.
- 76 Labor believes in the centrality of the alliance to Australia's national security requirements in critical areas such as intelligence on terrorism, defence equipment and broader strategic stabilisation in East Asia.
- 77 Labor believes that the ANZUS Treaty, which is central to the alliance relationship, is one of Australia's great national assets.
- 78 Labor continues to build on this excellent relationship and work with the US to address new and emerging challenges.
- 79 Labor will continue to promote joint defence exercises and improved interoperability with US military forces, within the context of Australia's national defence objectives.
- 80 Built on a foundation of mutual respect and a sense of genuine partnership, Labor seeks to build stronger ties in the region.
- 81 Labor strongly supports enhancing people-to-people contacts between Australia and our East Asian neighbours and will actively pursue the further development of social, cultural and educational ties.
- 82 Labor will place new emphasis on ensuring that the languages of the region are taught more widely in our schools.
- 83 Labor welcomes China's economic growth, and will work to encourage China's emergence as a major, constructive influence on regional and global affairs. Labor is ensuring that as China grows, Australia is positioned to benefit from this growth while preserving our core national interests. Labor is optimistic about the Australia–China economic relationship and will ensure Australia takes advantage of the increasing openness and centres of growth in China.
- 84 The China relationship is important in its own right, we do not believe it is a question of either/or with other Asian partners and the US. A prosperous China, fully engaged in the region's affairs is good for Australia and good for the region.
- 85 Labor will further strengthen engagement with Japan, Australia's closest partner in Asia.
- 86 Labor has elevated, and will continue to strengthen, Australia's political and security relationship with Korea, our third largest trading partner, including through a security agreement that is Korea's first aside from its alliance with the US.
- 87 Labor welcomes India's emergence as a major player in regional and global affairs. We will work to continue to intensify the bilateral relationship with India through more high-level contacts, new forms of regional and bilateral cooperation and expanded commercial links, building on the Strategic Partnership signed in November 2009.

- 88 Labor commends Indonesia's emergence as a vibrant democracy, and will intensify engagement with the government of President Yudhoyono in Indonesia.
- 89 Labor will continue to build closer partnerships with all ASEAN countries.
- 90 Labor believes that Australia needs to continue to take a leading role in promoting development, security and stability in the Pacific. Labor's Pacific Partnerships for Development has 11 Pacific Island Government partners, working together to have a real and positive impact on the lives of ordinary people in the Pacific.
- 91 As the region's largest bilateral donor, Labor has maintained Australia's commitment to the region through an effective aid program underpinned by accountable development strategies.
- 92 In the Pacific, Labor, in collaboration with our Pacific partners, will:
- promote sustainable and equitable development
 - strengthen regional cooperation in areas including Defence and security, climate change, natural disaster planning, response and relief, sustainable agriculture, education, fisheries research and protection
 - work to ensure that impacts on the peoples and nations of the Pacific are fully considered in the negotiation of solutions to global problems and their interests are represented internationally.
- 93 Labor supports the development of a strong political, economic and cultural partnership with the European Union and the countries of Europe.
- 94 Labor will continue to look for ways to enhance our cooperation and policy approaches with the UK and acknowledges the unique nature of the relationship, given its breadth, depth and long history.
- 95 Labor will engage in both the challenges and opportunities of Africa by working with both its individual nation states and important regional institutions including the African Union and the Southern African Development Community.
- 96 Labor also supports expanding cooperation with the countries and organisations of the Middle East and North Africa in pursuit of Australian consular, commercial, security and broader strategic objectives. Labor values the strong and growing people-to-people and commercial links that underpin this cooperation, and recognises the important role that the region plays in determining global responses to global problems. Labor believes the previous Australian Government underestimated the importance of this region not only to Australia's national interests but also to regional political and economic stability.
- 97 Labor is investing in building long-term bilateral relationships with key Middle Eastern countries and important organisations such as the Arab League, and the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf.
- 98 Labor believes that the Muslim world is important to Australia. Because of the connection with so many Australians of Islamic faith; because so many of Australia's key neighbours and partners are Muslim nations; and because the challenges that face the world require shared solutions, Labor is strengthening Australia's links with the Muslim world, including through the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.
- 99 Labor is committed to supporting an enduring and just two-state solution to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, based on the right of Israel to live in peace within secure borders internationally recognised and agreed by the parties, and reflecting the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people to also live in peace and security within their own state.

- 100 Labor is deeply disturbed by the destabilising role of Iran in the Middle East and beyond, and by the lack of Iran's compliance with international measures aimed at its nuclear programs. Labor will coordinate closely with the UN and like-minded nations to take measures to increase pressure on Iran to comply with UN resolutions and to prevent the acquisition of nuclear weapons. Labor also calls on Iran to cease support for terrorism and desist from its calls for and efforts towards the destruction of Israel.
- 101 Labor supports expanded relations with the Americas, including Canada, the Caribbean, Central America and South America. Labor believes that Australia should build on growing people-to-people links between our countries to work together on shared issues including trade and climate change.

The fight to overcome poverty

- 102 The fight against global poverty is one of the greatest challenges of the 21st Century. Australia has a strategic, economic and moral stake in the battle against global poverty. It is a fundamental role of any modern society to advance the development of the poorest people, communities and nations and assist them in the transition from poverty to prosperity.
- 103 Labor believes the fundamental purpose of Australian aid is to help people overcome poverty and save lives. This also serves Australia's national interests by promoting stability and prosperity both in our region and beyond. We focus our effort in areas where Australia can make a difference and where our resources can most effectively and efficiently be deployed.
- 104 Labor believes fair go for all is part of our national character—and that fair go extends to the 1.4 billion members of the human family who still live in grinding poverty. The idea of giving everyone a fair go is ingrained in all Australians, and Australians are, by instinct, a compassionate people.
- 105 Labor wants enhanced effectiveness to be the cornerstone of Australia's aid program and for Australia to be world-leading in maximising aid effectiveness. Labor is committed to an efficient and effective program that drives value for money by delivering real and measurable results. Ultimately we aim to help create communities and countries where assistance is no longer needed.
- 106 Labor wants an aid program of which all Australians should be proud. A program which all Australians can have the opportunity to participate in and support through volunteering or through the work of non-government organisations.
- 107 Labor believes that the Millennium Development Goals, the global blueprint to end extreme poverty, should continue to guide Australia's international development assistance. Labor wants an aid program makes a real difference to those living in extreme poverty, working to:
- eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
 - achieve universal primary education
 - promote gender equality and empower women
 - reduce child mortality
 - improve maternal health and family planning
 - combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
 - ensure environmental sustainability
 - develop a global partnership for development.

- 108 Labor also acknowledges that progress towards these Millennium Development Goals can be wiped out where appropriate services are not available in emergency situations. Labor will ensure we are able to help countries in times of natural disasters by working in cooperation with international and domestic partners to improve disaster preparedness and develop emergency services.
- 109 Labor is committed to Australia taking a leadership role on the issue of international development assistance, committing to actively campaigning through international forums, multilateral and bilateral frameworks and its relationships with other countries to ensure, as far as possible, the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and internationally agreed aid and development assistance targets.
- 110 Labor is committed to increasing Overseas Development Assistance to 0.5 per cent of Gross National Income by 2015. This would bring Australia to the OECD average for the relative size of our aid program. Beyond 2015–16, as economic and fiscal conditions permit, Labor has an aspirational goal of raising aid to 0.7 per cent of GNI. This is a long-standing policy adopted by Australian governments since 1970.
- 111 Labor believes Australia's overseas aid efforts must advance human rights, including promoting access to basic rights to health, shelter, education, clean water, sanitation and emergency services support. As having an independent civil society in development partner countries is important for advancing human rights, a key plank Australia aid efforts will be to nurture and support it. Labor acknowledges the 2010 recognition by the UN General Assembly of the access to water and sanitation as a human right.
- 112 Labor believes all human beings have the right to live in dignity and with freedom from want and fear.
- 113 Labor will maintain the geographical focus of Australia's aid program on the Asia-Pacific region, including our nearest neighbours, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Timor Leste.
- 114 Labor is also committed to strengthening our engagement in Africa, South Asia and Latin America where many of the development challenges are greatest.
- 115 Labor recognises that pro-poor economic growth is the most powerful tool to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development. Economic growth helps to create jobs, lift household incomes and generates the government revenues needed to provide key public services such as hospitals and schools.
- 116 Labor recognises that by lifting people out of poverty, Australia is helping to grow the global economy and that is good for Australian business.
- 117 Labor believes that education is a key pathway out of poverty. The better educated nations will be the most resilient economies of the 21st century. Education also helps communities to combat radicalisation.
- 118 Labor believes the empowerment of women should be a fundamental principle of Australia's aid program. It is one of the most effective tools to increase the chances of education for all young women and girls, raise economic productivity, reduce infant and maternal mortality, and improve health including the prevention of HIV/AIDS.
- 119 Labor believes enabling more children, particularly girls, to attend school for a longer and better education, gives them the skills to build their own futures and, in time, escape poverty.

- 120 Labor is committed to saving the lives of poor women and children through greater access to quality maternal and child health services such as skilled birth attendants and midwives, as well as supporting large scale disease prevention, vaccination and treatment.
- 121 Labor has a strong commitment to ensuring food security, water and sanitation, climate change and disability are afforded appropriate attention as important development challenges.
- 122 Labor is committed to enhancing disaster preparedness and delivering faster, more effective responses to humanitarian crises, given the increased frequency and impact of natural disasters in recent decades. Labor will ensure that the Commonwealth promotes a national all-hazards approach to disaster resilience, addressing mitigation, response and recovery, and ensuring well-resources emergency services are maintained.
- 123 Labor remains committed to fostering good governance and accountability through the development assistance program, particularly in fragile states.
- 124 Labor is committed to delivering more of its overseas development assistance through non-government organisations and to finding new ways of working with NGOs and civil society to ensure the assistance is efficient and effective.
- 125 Labor will work actively with multilateral agencies to deliver assistance effectively and will work to strengthen and reform multilateral agencies and international financial institutions.

Assisting Australians abroad

- 126 Labor places the highest priority on the safety of Australians overseas and is committed to delivering a high standard of travel advice and consular assistance to all Australians overseas so that our millions of 'unofficial ambassadors' can travel the world in safety.
- 127 Labor supports efforts to allow consular representatives to visit Australians promptly after they have been arrested and to pass messages between them and their loved ones.
- 128 Labor is committed to ensuring Australian passports are at the forefront of passport technology, ensuring that people applying for and using passports are who they say they are.
- 129 Labor is committed to ensuring Australian passports comply with international standards and are accepted in all countries assisting smooth transit across international borders.

The challenge of terrorism

- 130 Labor led older generations of Australians in successfully defending Australia as a secure and democratic nation. The growing presence of terrorism in our region poses new and complex security challenges.
- 131 Labor will increase engagement in our region and cooperation with our neighbours—measures that are fundamental to meeting the new security challenges. Labor will ensure that our Defence Forces, Police and Emergency Services are equipped to meet the new challenges.
- 132 Labor's first priority is the Defence and security of our nation and its people. However, Labor refuses to manipulate fear or racism for political gain in response to terror. Australia needs tough laws to deal with terrorism but, just as importantly, we need well-balanced laws that target the terrorists, not innocent citizens. We need strong safeguards to protect the civil and human rights that are fundamental to our freedoms. Labor is committed to finalising the review of the Anti-Terrorism Legislation.

- 133 In the past, Australia has not had a properly integrated national security policy. Labor in Government has outlined new initiatives to enhance national security, including:
- the appointment of a National Security Adviser
 - the creation of a strategic policy framework for national security
 - a National Intelligence and Coordination Committee
 - improvements to Australia's national crisis management arrangements
 - the preparation of new Defence White Papers at intervals of no greater than five years.
- 134 Labor believes that an effective strategy for combating terrorism must promote justice, the rule of law, genuine peace and inclusive development, as well as confront those factors that make it easier for terrorist organisations to recruit within the region. Australia's military/ security assistance should promote these objectives. The strategy should include addressing the economic, employment and educational opportunities available to young people across the region. Labor believes this requires an integrated, comprehensive strategy including cooperation with and capacity building for local security forces.
- 135 Labor has developed and is implementing a national strategy to counter violent extremism. Labor believes a national approach involving engagement with local communities and a strong partnership between Australian governments will be essential to the development of a coordinated and effective approach to address this complex problem.
- 136 Labor believes that the global nature and reach of various terrorist organisations will mean that Australia will rely on global intelligence exchange—as well as support—for an expanding range of UN multilateral measures designed to combat terrorist financing and explicitly to outlaw defined terrorist organisations.
- 137 Labor believes that addressing terrorism requires a long term commitment to international efforts to stabilise Afghanistan. This requires both a military commitment and an effective strategy to build the capacity of the Afghan Government to manage its own affairs. Labor is also committed to comprehensive engagement with Pakistan to assist that country in tackling its internal security and economic challenges. Labor also remains committed to assisting Iraq to achieve long-term stability.
- 138 Labor is also committed to ensuring Australia's cyber security arrangements are able to meet the challenges presented by the electronic environment, which is presenting additional opportunity and vulnerabilities for individuals, business and government, with sophisticated attacks coming from criminal groups and foreign governments.
- 139 Finally, Labor is working together with industry to ensure there are sufficient measures in place to reduce the risk of chemicals of security concern.

Emergency management

- 140 Labor will ensure that the Commonwealth provides strong leadership in promoting an all-hazards approach to emergency management and disaster resilience that focuses on how prevention, mitigation and preparation can improve response and recovery.
- 141 Labor will lead the implementation of the National Disaster Resilience Strategy agreed to by COAG in February 2011 which identifies priority areas to build disaster resilient communities across Australia.
- 142 Recognising that disaster resilience is a shared responsibility for individuals, households, businesses and communities, as well as for governments, Labor will work with all stakeholders to deliver sustained behavioural change and enduring partnerships.

- 143 Labor will work with regional neighbours/partners to encourage the exchange of information, capabilities and expertise as well operational assistance and cooperation during emergency situations.
- 144 Labor will work with other levels of government to ensure local communities understand the potential risks and are capable of addressing of them.
- 145 Labor believes that appropriate mitigation activities are vital in preventing loss of life and damage to property caused by natural disasters. Labor will achieve this by working with states and territories to ensure that national, state and local disaster plans, strategies and program funding reflects these goals.

Strength, sustainability and self reliance in defence

- 146 The foundation of Labor's Defence policy is the principle of Australian self reliance. Labor considers that Australia's armed forces need to be able to defend Australia without relying on the combat forces of other countries. Labor believes that the principle of self reliance reflects, fundamentally, Australia's sense of itself as an independent nation.
- 147 Notwithstanding its commitment to a self reliant Defence policy, Labor recognises the importance of strong bilateral and multilateral Defence relationships in providing for Australia's Defence. Where appropriate, Labor will both strengthen existing Defence ties through the UN, with our key allies, and by building new relationships within the Asia-Pacific region.
- 148 Labor believes that the ADF needs to possess the capability to make contributions to international operations led by the UN and Australia's key allies in the pursuit of broader national strategic objectives. Those contingents will be drawn from the forces and capabilities that are developed for the defence of Australia and for operations in our region.
- 149 Labor will ensure that ADF capability development is directly related to Australia's strategic interests and that appropriate regular strategic reviews are undertaken with public reports published.
- 150 Labor is committed to maintaining a strong and efficiently managed Defence organisation that possesses the equipment, personnel and skills that are needed to meet the demands placed upon it by the Australian Government. Labor will ensure the Defence Strategic Reform Program continues to focus on greater accountability in Defence spending, well-planned reform which includes employee input, and the conversion of military and contractor positions to public sector employment where it is more cost effective and appropriate to do so.

International and regional defence relationships

- 151 Labor recognises the importance of both bilateral and multilateral Defence relationships in achieving security for Australia and creating and maintaining stability in Australia's strategic environment. Defence cooperation with Australia's neighbours is important for building regional security.
- 152 Labor will ensure that Defence cooperation does not contribute to any suppression or violation of human rights or democratic freedoms. Labor will closely monitor the human rights performance of foreign military forces with which Australia engages in defence cooperation. If necessary, Australia will work with regional military forces to increase respect for human rights and democratic processes.

Pine Gap

- 153 The Pine Gap Joint Facility makes an important contribution to the Australia–US Alliance as well as to the deterrence and avoidance of conflict. Labor will require that this facility continue to be managed and operated on a joint basis and only with the Australian Government’s full knowledge of and concurrence with the facility’s activities. Labor will ensure the operations of the Joint Facility are consistent with Australia’s national security, disarmament and non-proliferation objectives. Labor will require that this facility continue to be managed and operated as a joint Australian–US facility within Full Knowledge and Concurrence arrangements to ensure the protection of Australian sovereignty.

Ballistic missile defence

- 154 Labor considers that the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and ballistic missile delivery systems is one of the most serious international security issues confronting the world today. Labor considers effective efforts to combat these developments require sustained multilateral, diplomatic and defence cooperation and action.
- 155 Labor is concerned that as a unilateral response to the problem of ballistic missile proliferation, national missile defence is disproportionate, technically questionable, costly and likely to be counter-productive. It also has the potential to undermine non-proliferation and derail world progress towards nuclear disarmament. Labor also notes that national missile defence would impact on the security situation in the Asia–Pacific region, and that this could have serious consequences for Australia’s strategic circumstances and national security.

Defence relationships in the Asia–Pacific region

- 156 Labor is committed to Australia comprehensively engaging with other nations in the Asia– Pacific region, as part of its efforts to foster and preserve peace, stability and security in the region. Labor recognises that these efforts are increasingly fundamental to Australia’s own national security. Australia’s participation in the Five Power Defence Arrangements will remain an important aspect of regional policy under Labor.
- 157 The continued development of Indonesia’s democracy and joint cooperation against terrorism, is allowing Australia to build on the strength of our relationship with that country. Labor will ensure that any Defence relationship between Australia and Indonesia will be as equal partners, to the benefit of both countries and that of our broader region while ensuring that Labor’s commitment to liberal democratic and human rights values is not compromised.
- 158 Australia has an ongoing relationship with New Zealand, based on historical and close ties.
- 159 Practical and mutually beneficial Defence and Security cooperation with Japan and the Republic of Korea reinforces the stability and security currently present in the Asia–Pacific region.
- 160 Australia has a special role and responsibility in its relations with Papua New Guinea. Labor in government will assist Papua New Guinea to develop an effective and disciplined defence force, while encouraging non-military solutions to problems of internal security and order.
- 161 Security of the Pacific nations is essential for regional security and Australia’s own defence. Labor will increase Australia’s efforts to engage in supporting sustainable development of the Pacific nations through the creation of democratic institutions, effective law enforcement and modern Defence Forces. Labor understands that this is a long-term process that must not be prematurely disengaged from. The improved ADF Civil-Military Cooperation capability represented by the Asia–Pacific Civil Military—Centre of Excellence will provide much needed support to these efforts.

Allied use of Australian facilities

- 162 Labor will support the use of facilities in Australia by the armed forces of friendly countries for combined exercises, training and goodwill visits, provided that in times of peace:
- use of Australian ports by foreign warships does not extend to the home porting of any of those vessels in Australia
 - staging of military aircraft through Australian airfields or airspace shall only be for such purposes as may be agreed beforehand by the Australian Government
 - no nuclear, biological or chemical weapons may be stored or stationed in Australia
 - nuclear powered vessels visit only those ports which have been determined as being suitable for those vessels and provided also that all other safety precautions and conditions that are deemed necessary by the relevant Australian authorities are complied with by the vessels concerned
 - appropriate environmental safeguards are in place.

Defence personnel and training

- 163 Labor is committed to an ADF which is made up of highly motivated, skilled, well trained and well equipped personnel who volunteer for service.
- 164 Labor is committed to ensuring female military personnel have equal opportunities for career progression and development within the ADF. Labor welcomes the Review into the treatment of women at the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) by the Australian Human Rights Commission and welcomes the commitment by government and Defence to implement the recommendations.
- 165 Labor will ensure that ADF pay and conditions continue to be fixed in a fair and transparent manner by an independent tribunal, and will review pay and conditions to ensure that recruitment attractions match those more broadly available in the labour market. Labor believes that ADF personnel have the right to form, and be members of, associations in respect of their pay and conditions. Labor will allow associations that can demonstrate a substantial membership to have the right to appear before the independent tribunal to present the views of serving members.
- 166 Labor will develop a better program of career planning, invest in better training programs providing marketable skills on discharge and will revise the approach to overseas deployments to ensure longer periods of rest and recuperation which is a more manageable result for families.
- 167 Labor will continue to develop incentives will also be developed to improve retention rates and reduce wastage caused by lack of direction, poor career planning opportunities and improper use of medical discharge processes.
- 168 Labor believes it is important that the nation's Defence Force be representative of the community it serves. Defence's recruitment policies should ensure that the ethnic composition of the ADF better reflects the cross section of Australian people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- 169 Labor believes that the Reserves are a critical component of Australia's Defence capability that need to be able to contribute to any sort of operation in which Australia might participate. Labor is committed to integrating full-time ADF and Reserve elements in a total force structure where the different role of all components is properly understood, valued and utilised effectively.

Occupational health and safety and workers' compensation

- 170 Labor will continue to support a modern, dedicated Occupational Health and Safety regime for all personnel, supported by a fair and supportive military rehabilitation and compensation scheme. Labor believes that these arrangements should reflect the unique employment circumstances of the ADF, the need to respect the historical approach to injury and illness incurred overseas and the need for firm policies of prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, return to work and income maintenance measures.
- 171 Labor is acutely aware of the stresses of military duty on active service overseas and the need to ensure that ADF members receive full support and treatment in the event of the debilitating and career threatening risks associated with mental health disorders. Labor will review the adequacy of current mental health screening and assessments processes and ensure early intervention and treatment in every case. This will also extend to include cases where there is abuse of processes of military justice, harassment, or discrimination, likely to result in stress affecting duties and career potential.

Military justice

- 172 As part of its commitment to lift the standard of military justice in the ADF, Labor is committed to making improvements to the system of military justice.
- 173 Labor will continue to improve the system to overcome any problem of harassment and breaches of natural justice. Labor will not tolerate failure to investigate complaints, cover up, or inadequate investigation. Labor will ensure that all allegations of sexual assault involving members of the ADF are referred immediately to the civilian police for investigation with total cooperation from the ADF command.
- 174 Labor will ensure impartial, rigorous and fair outcomes for all affected parties in any complaint lodged for redress. Labor is committed to a strict accountability system to improve the transparency and public accountability of all military justice investigations.

Defence administration, industry and procurement

- 175 Labor is committed to fostering a strong and viable, long-term domestic Defence industry and will ensure that government policy reflects that commitment.
- 176 Labor recognises that Defence acquisition plays a significant role in the modernisation of Australian industry and the development of a skills base. Labor will optimise Australian Defence Industry involvement while maintaining a high level of marketplace competition and value for money for the Australian taxpayer. Consistent with Australia's international obligations, Labor will maximise the participation of Australian companies, particularly SMEs, and as a consequence of Australian jobs, in Defence procurement contracts, and ensure that Australian supply capabilities are maintained and enhanced through the application of Australian Industry Capability Plans. Labor will ensure that contractual obligations arising from such arrangements are enforced.
- 177 Labor will ensure that Defence procurement decisions will be taken on a 'whole-of-life' cost basis, and will take full account of strategic considerations and the need to maintain and develop critical supply capabilities. Given the importance to the security and safety of our armed forces of the best quality and highest technical standard defence uniforms, Labor will, consistent with Australia's international obligations, maximise the participation of Australian textile garment and footwear suppliers in defence procurement, and ensure that ADF textile garment and footwear suppliers fully comply with the government's ethical procurement principles set out in this Platform.

- 178 Labor will ensure that future outsourcing only occurs in areas where real long-term savings can be generated without compromising the operational capability of the ADF.
- 179 Labor is committed to continuing the reform and improve Defence acquisitions, informed by the findings and implementation of the Mortimer and Rizzo reports and the Black review, to ensure that the Defence procurement process delivers better outcomes for the ADF, the Australian Government, Australian industry and the Australian community.
- 180 Labor recognises the cultural, heritage and environmental significance of many surplus Defence properties around Australia. Labor will review on an ongoing basis the future of all sites identified as being surplus to Defence needs, before deciding whether to sell or transfer these properties to the community. Labor will ensure that Defence consults with all affected parties, including local communities, local and state government agencies, and private interests before determining the future of individual sites.

Defence industry sectoral plans

- 181 Labor supports the development of Defence Industry sectoral plans for shipbuilding, aerospace, electronics, land and weapons.
- 182 Labor believes that the sectoral plans represent a more strategic approach to Defence Industry policy that will enable Australia to sustain key industry capabilities necessary to meet our long-term national security needs.
- 183 Labor supports a Defence shipbuilding and submarine sector plan that maintains a viable Defence shipbuilding and repair capability in Australia. Labor will ensure that the ship building and repair industry is based on a competitive private sector model in such a way as to ensure continuity of work through prime and sub-contractors, recognising the need for flexibility in the national heavy engineering sector.
- 184 Labor recognises that a viable and competitive naval ship building industry is strategically vital for Australia's defence, as well as for the continuing health of the heavy engineering and high-tech industries involved in modern weaponry.
- 185 Labor is committed to the regular publication of a Defence Capability Plan to ensure that the Defence industry sector remains informed about future acquisition projects, particularly the proposed timing, cost and level of capability associated with such projects.
- 186 Labor believes that the Defence Science and Technology Organisation has an impressive record of research and development of Defence-related technologies. Labor will further expand and encourage the links between Defence Science and Technology Organisation and the Australian Defence industry, including technology transfer to Australian industry. As far as possible, Labor will foster the retention of intellectual property ownership in Australia, including where appropriate ownership of intellectual property by Defence.

Defence exports

- 187 Labor will ensure government control over the manufacture and export of arms, munitions and military goods and services.

- 188 Labor supports the export of Australian Defence equipment within strict guidelines. Labor will not permit Defence exports to countries where those exports would:
- have an adverse impact on Australia's security interests
 - contravene UN embargoes
 - pose a clear, identifiable risk of being used for the major suppression or violation of human rights or fundamental freedoms.
- 189 Defence exports are important in maintaining local industry support for the ADF and in contributing to Australia's own Defence capability. Accordingly, Labor has established the Defence Export Unit to ensure maximum opportunities for the Australian Defence industry, within the strict guidelines required for Defence exports.

Meeting the needs of Australia's veterans

- 190 Labor respects the tradition of special care for Australia's servicemen and women who serve overseas, within the modern context. Labor will continue to care for and honour veterans for their service to the maintenance of world peace and domestic security through dedicated programs of support, care and commemoration.
- 191 Labor notes that these traditional policies and programs have evolved slowly over almost a century and, that in some instances, may no longer be consistent with the needs of veterans and their families in a modern society.
- 192 Labor will not tolerate any further erosion of the traditional distinction accorded to those with warlike service as appropriate in a modern service context.
- 193 Labor, recognises that inconsistencies have arisen in the approach taken by government to the management of veterans' and war widows' entitlements.
- 194 Labor also recognises that many of these inconsistencies result from different judgements and perceptions in the past and cannot be remedied without considerable cost, as well as the risk of creating further inconsistencies.
- 195 Consistent with the philosophy of benefits being relevant to contemporary needs and with the principles of fairness, equity and transparency, Labor will continue to review policies to ensure that they adapted to and are appropriate for the current needs of our veteran community.

Veterans' needs

- 196 In addition to Labor's historic delivery of disability and compensation pension improvements, Labor will continue to explore equitable and affordable mechanisms for the improvement of other military pensions.
- 197 Labor's policy for veterans will be structured to respond to the differing needs of veterans according to their stage of life, with flexible programs based on meeting contemporary needs:
- Veterans who served in World War II, Korea and subsequent deployments in South East Asia who are now largely retired and whose issues are now predominantly ones of health and aged care.
 - Veterans who served in the Vietnam War, whose immediate needs are those of income security for their future retirement, support for the raising of families and programs of support for families suffering from the effects of substance abuse, gambling and acts of violence.
 - Those who have served in peace keeping missions, and deployments such as the Gulf, Timor Leste, Afghanistan, Iraq and the Solomon Islands, most of whom are yet to become veterans, but whose needs at present seem likely to emulate those of the Vietnam generation.

Veterans' families

- 198 Labor is committed to the care and welfare of veterans' partners and families who may have suffered as a result of the veteran's service, particularly from the ill health of a veteran, as part of a policy of lifelong care for those injured or affected by their service.
- 199 Labor will work to address the health and welfare needs of younger veterans' families.
- 200 Labor will ensure there are adequate programs to assist these families to meet the pressures and demands of modern society.
- 201 Labor will also undertake health studies into the health and welfare of children of younger veterans, to better establish whether there are any intergenerational health effects flowing from their service.

Programs of income support

- 202 Consistent with general policies which have seen the provision of safety nets for those who are disadvantaged in society and unable to take their place in the workforce due to disability or age; special provision has always been made for veterans and their dependants. This uniquely includes the effects of service which impact on veterans' employability within the labour market.
- 203 Recognising the principle of entitlements based on need, and consistent with the current principles governing the provision of income support, Labor will continue to provide programs of income support for veterans, their partners and widows, when as the result of service in the ADF, they have been unable to provide for themselves and their families due to loss of work capacity, death, or age.

Disability compensation

- 204 Injuries and illness resulting from veterans' service overseas have traditionally been compensated in a separate scheme in recognition of the different circumstances and status of that service. This is reflected in some circumstances by a more generous standard of proof, the lack of any onus of proof and a longstanding commitment to the benefit of the doubt operating in the veteran's favour.
- 205 Labor will honour these commitments and the values on which they are based.
- 206 Labor is committed to the support of veterans through a range of programs including the Building Excellence in Support and Training and Training & Information Program programs ensuring that ex-service organisations can assist with compensation claims for their members and provide welfare support.

War widows

- 207 Australians have always cared and provided for those whose partners were lost in action or who died as the result of their war-caused injuries or illness. Labor recognises that the traditional programs of support for war widows as provided for in the Veterans' Entitlement Act may no longer be relevant and that there are strong perceptions in the community of unfairness with respect to eligibility.
- 208 Labor also clearly recognises there are some widows in need of greater support, especially those in private rental accommodation, and younger widows without children whose entitlements have been reduced in the past.
- 209 Recognising the difficulties faced by a new generation of war spouses, Labor will continue to provide support for war spouses and their children, to enter academic or vocational training.

Health care

- 210 Health care policy for veterans has, from the time of Federation, provided for free treatment of all service-related injury and illness. This is now denoted by provision of a White Card.
- 211 In more recent times, free private health care for all health conditions has been provided by the Gold Card to a range of veterans and widows. Eligibility is automatic for some classes of veterans and widows but generally requires warlike (qualifying) service and an age of 70 or above.
- 212 Assistance in the home, aimed at keeping ageing veterans and widows out of costly institutionalised care is also provided under the Homecare Program, consistent with the Home and Community Care program available to the community at large. This forms part of the traditional approach of lifelong care to those who served Australia abroad.
- 213 Labor will retain the current programs of health care for veterans and honour the historic commitment to free treatment for all service-related injuries and disease. The Gold, White and Orange cards will be retained with existing entitlements.
- 214 Labor will expedite the current program of mortality and health studies and research into past deployments, as well as ensuring that the current processes for future deployments properly deal with health risks in advance, and after return to Australia—particularly with respect to record-keeping.
- 215 Labor recognises that mental health issues arising from service, such as post traumatic stress disorder, have affected veterans from all conflicts. Labor encourages and supports measures designed to ensure that existing programs take account of the mental health needs and requirements of veterans.

Commemoration

- 216 Commemoration of veterans, their commitment and sacrifice has historically been restricted to the observance of ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day by the public, with little government involvement. Labor introduced the current program of commemoration in 1992 and has continued to support that effort.
- 217 Labor supports a bipartisan approach to commemorative activity, with a concentration on educative programs under the aegis of the Australian War Memorial. ANZAC Day will continue to be the central focus of commemorative commitments.
- 218 Labor recognises the significance, importance and sacred nature of battlefields where our troops have lost their lives. Where possible, Labor will actively work with foreign governments and other parties to protect and preserve the integrity of significant battlefields where Australian troops have served. These locations include, but are not limited to, the Gallipoli Peninsula and the Kokoda Track.
- 219 Labor will implement education and information campaigns to ensure all Australians, especially the young, develop a full appreciation of the sacrifice and service of our veterans and current servicemen and women.

Administration

- 220 Currently administration of veterans' and ex-service personnel matters are concentrated within the Department of Veterans' Affairs, recognising the need for better continuity of specialised client service around Australia. Recognising that the administration of veterans' policy and ex-service personnel matters will continue to merge in the future as the nature of defence service evolves and the older veteran cohort diminishes in number, Labor will continue with a dedicated and properly funded agency for veterans within the Defence portfolio.