



# Air and Sea Lift Capability

The Integrated Investment Program will guide approximately \$195 billion of investment to 2025-26 to deliver the future force of the Defence White Paper. The Government will invest around six per cent of Defence capability expenditure to 2025-26 in our air and sea lift capabilities. Given the substantial distances over which the Australian Defence Force (ADF) must operate – nationally, regionally and globally – air and sea lift capabilities are essential. A flexible force of air and sea lift capabilities will enable the ADF to reach, resupply and sustain missions in different locations. The ADF also needs to have lift capacity to be highly mobile within any area of operation.

## Key air and sea lift capabilities

The ADF's strategic transport capability will be greatly enhanced through the already delivered acquisition of two additional heavy-lift C-17A Globemaster transport aircraft, capable of moving large cargo and numbers of personnel great distances, such as from Australia to the Middle East, increasing our fleet to eight aircraft. Additional heavy lift aircraft will be considered at a later stage.

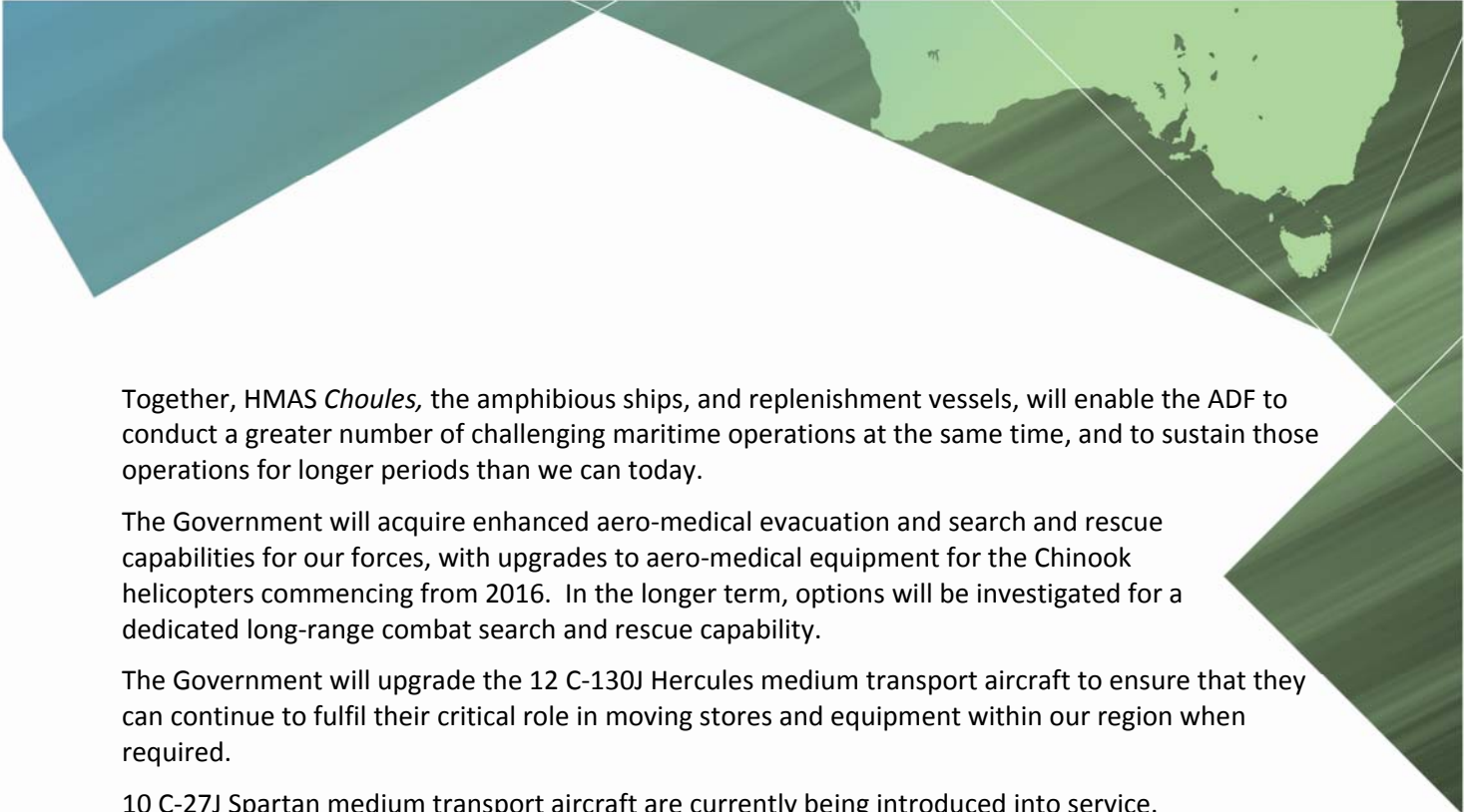
The Government will extend the range of combat and surveillance aircraft, acquiring two additional KC-30A air-to-air refuellers before the end of this decade for a total of seven aircraft. Expanding the fleet to nine aircraft in the longer term will be considered to meet increasing demand.

Our Chinook helicopters are a workhorse of the ADF, capable of moving stores and personnel, including vehicles and artillery around the battlefield or from ships to the land without the need for an airfield as well as undertaking aero-medical evacuation. The Government will acquire three additional CH-47F Chinook heavy-lift helicopters in the near term to expand battlefield lift capacity and support tactical missions including aero-medical evacuation for a total of 10 helicopters.

The logistics support ship, HMAS *Choules*, and the two *Canberra* Class amphibious ships, will provide scalable and flexible options for greater capacity sea lift and amphibious operations. The Government will extend the life of HMAS *Choules* and update the capabilities onboard, including modern self defence and aviation support systems until it is replaced around 2030.

In addition, the Government will acquire a new large hulled multi-purpose patrol vessel, the Australian Defence Vessel *Ocean Protector* for the Navy to support border protection and maritime resource security related tasks with the Australian Border Force.

Sustainment of our maritime capabilities will be improved by two new replenishment vessels that will begin service by 2026. The vessels will provide naval combat units with fuel, water and stores while underway at sea. A third replenishment vessel or additional logistics support ship will be acquired the late 2020s.



Together, HMAS *Choules*, the amphibious ships, and replenishment vessels, will enable the ADF to conduct a greater number of challenging maritime operations at the same time, and to sustain those operations for longer periods than we can today.

The Government will acquire enhanced aero-medical evacuation and search and rescue capabilities for our forces, with upgrades to aero-medical equipment for the Chinook helicopters commencing from 2016. In the longer term, options will be investigated for a dedicated long-range combat search and rescue capability.

The Government will upgrade the 12 C-130J Hercules medium transport aircraft to ensure that they can continue to fulfil their critical role in moving stores and equipment within our region when required.

10 C-27J Spartan medium transport aircraft are currently being introduced into service.

The Spartans will enhance the ADF's air lift capability, providing a unique capacity to move personnel and small cargos to remote locations using shorter landing strips not suitable for any other fixed wing military aircraft in the ADF fleet.

The MRH-90 Troop lift helicopter will continue to be introduced into service, with Army to operate 39 to 41 aircraft and Navy to operate up to eight aircraft. The aircraft will be a force multiplier for Army in tactical air mobility and for Navy in maritime support. Current plans include a requirement for role-specific upgrades to the MRH-90 Troop lift helicopter to replace the S-70A Blackhawk in support of domestic counter terrorism operations.

## People

An additional around 800 ADF positions will be allocated to 2025-26 to assist with the air and sea lift fleets, including introduction of the two additional heavy lift C-17A Globemaster transport aircraft, two additional air-to-air refuelling aircraft, 10 C-27J Spartan medium transport aircraft, two new replenishment vessels, and three additional CH-47 Chinook heavy-lift helicopters.

## Infrastructure

Substantial investment in support of air lift is programmed for upgraded infrastructure at RAAF Base Amberley, Queensland, including facilities to support an increased number of tactical, medium and strategic lift aircraft. Funding is also programmed at RAAF Base Richmond, New South Wales, in the latter years of the decade to 2025-26.

Australia's growing sea lift capability will be supported by planned upgrades to wharves and port facilities, including substantial investment in Fleet Base East, combined with continued commercial arrangements for ADF access to civilian infrastructure.