Section 5

Australia

1 General Situation

Australia shares universal values with Japan, such as respect for freedom and human rights, and democracy. It is allied with the United States, as are Japan and the ROK.

In Australia, a federal election was held in September 2013. Tony Abbott, the head of the Liberal Party of the conservative coalition which won control of the lower house, took office as Prime Minister, resulting in a change of government from the Labor Party to the conservative coalition. The Abbott administration criticized the defense spending cuts of the previous administration, and signaled its intention to actively make investments which are deemed necessary for building a stronger defense force.

This policy has continued under the Turnbull administration inaugurated in September 2015. The Defence White Paper released in February 2016 during the Turnbull administration states that over the next two decades, the Australian government will make important investments to maintain a high level of capability of the ADF, setting out a plan to continue to increase the troop strength and acquire high performance equipment. The white paper states explicitly that defense funding would be increased over the next decade, setting a specific target to reach 2% of Australia’s GDP by 2020. With regard to Australia’s international relationships, the white paper sets forth that Australia would aim to mature and deepen practical engagement with partners across the Indo-Pacific, including Japan, while continuing to give highest priority to its alliance with the United States. To achieve its strategic defense objective of contributing military capabilities to coalition operations that support Australia’s interests in a rules-based global order, Australia makes proactive contributions to the peace and stability of the international community through the deployment of ADF to overseas operations, among other efforts.

2 Security and Defense Policies

The Australian government launched its first National Security Strategy (the Strategy) in January 2013. The Strategy provides a blueprint for national security over the next decade, presenting the recognition that responding to the economic and strategic changes in the Asia-Pacific region is vital to the national security of Australia. The Strategy defines four objectives for the country’s national security: (1) to ensure a safe and resilient population; (2) to protect and strengthen Australia’s sovereignty; (3) to secure Australia’s assets, infrastructure and institutions; and (4) to promote a favorable international environment. On this basis, the Strategy outlines the following priorities for the next five years: (1) enhanced engagement in the Asia-Pacific region; (2) integrated cyber policy and operations; and (3) effective partnerships.

In February 2016, the Australian government released its seventh new Defence White Paper. This white paper presents an outlook of Australia’s security environment over the next two decades. It then outlines the direction of Australia’s defense strategy for dealing with this environment, and the development of the defense force pursuant to this strategy.

Specifically, the white paper maintains that while there is little prospect of a military attack on
Australian territory in the period to 2035, Australia will face new complexities and challenges. Based on this understanding, three strategic defense interests are identified, namely: a secure, resilient Australia (including the security of sea lanes); a secure nearer region; and a stable Indo-Pacific region and rules-based global order. Additionally, three strategic defense objectives are given, which are: (1) Deter, deny, and defeat attacks on or threats to Australia and its national interests; (2) Make military contributions to support the security of maritime Southeast Asia and support the governments of South Pacific countries to build and strengthen their security; and (3) Contribute military capabilities to coalition operations that support Australia’s interests in a rules-based global order. To maintain the ADF’s high level of capability needed to achieve these objectives, the government will make important investments. In addition to increasing the troop strength by approximately 4,400 personnel, Australia will acquire high performance equipment, including 12 new submarines, 3 air warfare destroyers (Aegis vessels), 72 F-35 Joint Strike Fighters, and 7 MQ-4C unmanned patrol aircraft. Simultaneously, Australia will seek to strengthen ISR capabilities, electronic warfare capabilities, and cyber security capabilities, as well as strengthen the functions of its bases in northern Australia and elsewhere. To support these programs by funding, the white paper also presents the concrete target of increasing defense funding to reach 2% of GDP by 2020.

### Relations with Other Countries

In the new Defence White Paper, Australia subscribes to the view that Australia’s security and prosperity are directly linked to the development of the nearer region, the Indo-Pacific region, and the global strategic environment. Based on this view, Australia will build and maintain international security relationships to achieve its strategic defense objectives. In particular, Australia will aim to mature and deepen practical engagement with partners across the Indo-Pacific region, including Indonesia, Japan, the ROK, New Zealand, India, and China, while continuing to give the highest priority to its alliance with the United States.

By way of the Force Posture Initiatives of November 2011, the United States and Australia announced that the U.S. Marine Corps would conduct rotational deployments approximately every six months to Darwin. Exercise Talisman Saber, started in 2005, is a biennial combined Australia-U.S. training activity designed to improve combat readiness and interoperability. About 33,000 U.S. Forces and ADF personnel participated in the exercise held in July 2015.

### Relations with the United States

In the Defence White Paper, Australia states that its alliance with the United States pursuant to the Security Treaty between Australia, New Zealand and the United States of America (ANZUS) is based on shared values and will continue to be the centerpiece of Australia’s defense policy. Australia notes that the United States, which remains the pre-eminent global military power over the next two decades, will continue to be its most important strategic partner, and the active presence of the United States will continue to underpin the stability of the region. It is stated that Australia thus welcomes and supports the critical role of the United States in ensuring stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

Since 1985, the two countries have been regularly convening the Australia-United States Ministerial Consultations (AUSMIN) to discuss major diplomatic and security issues. On the operational front, the two countries have made efforts to increase interoperability through joint exercises, including Exercise Talisman Saber.

Since April 2012, the U.S. Marine Corps have conducted rotational deployments to northern Australia. On the equipment front, the two countries have been simplifying the export procedures associated with...
equipment deals pursuant to the Australia-U.S. Defence Trade Cooperation Treaty that entered into force in May 2013. In addition, the two countries are examining the joint development of the F-35 JSF and missile defense cooperation. Furthermore, bilateral cooperation is being advanced in areas such as ISR, space, and cyber. Since the Abbott administration that was inaugurated in September 2013, Australia has continued to pursue the further deepening of bilateral relations. In August 2014, the two sides signed the Force Posture Agreement which provides a legal framework for the rotational deployment of the U.S. Marine Corps. From October 2014, the ADF has been participating in the combat mission of the U.S.-led operation against ISIL. In July 2015, the two countries conducted a training in which B-52 strategic bombers of the U.S. Forces were flown from the U.S. mainland to drop bombs on an air weapons range in Australia and then returned to the United States. At the 30th AUSMIN in October 2015, the two sides signed a joint statement on defense cooperation to serve as a guideline for future defense cooperation, and reaffirmed their strong bilateral cooperation.

**Relations with China**

In the Defence White Paper, Australia states that its relationship with China is crucial in different ways from its relationship with the United States, and that it welcomes China’s continued economic growth and the opportunities this is bringing for Australia and other countries in the Indo-Pacific. It goes on to say Australia is committed to continuing the development of Australia’s defense relations with China, and working to enhance mutual understanding, facilitate transparency, and build trust.

Based on such a policy, Australia and China continuously hold dialogues among their defense authorities, along with exchanges to develop the cooperative relations between their defense forces, including joint exercises and mutual visits by vessels.

Meanwhile, like the previous Abbott administration, the Turnbull administration has been making Australia’s position on China very clear. The Joint Statement of the AUSMIN in October 2015, referring to China by name, expresses strong concerns over recent land reclamation and construction activity in the South China Sea, and calls on all claimant states to halt militarization. When the United States conducted the Freedom of Navigation Operation in the South China Sea in the same month, Minister for Defence Marise Payne of Australia issued a statement expressing strong support for rights to freedom of navigation and overflight under international law.

In the Defence White Paper, Australia asserts that it will be important for regional stability that China provides reassurance to its neighbors by being more transparent about its defense policies, and expresses particular concern with the unprecedented pace and scale of China’s land reclamation activities in the South China Sea. That said, in October 2015, the government of the Northern Territory leased to a Chinese company the rights to operate the commercial wharfs of the Darwin Port, also utilized by ADF and U.S. Force vessels. The fact that the Australian federal government did not lodge objections, saying there were no security concerns, led to people expressing uneasiness within and outside of Australia.

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13 While Australia considers that the threat of an ICBM attack on Australia is low, it deems there is a possible threat of an attack on Australian territory by a long-range or submarine-launched ballistic missile or cruise missile, as well as attack on the deployed ADF by a short-range ballistic missile or cruise missile. To counter such threats, Australia and the United States have launched a working group to study options that could contribute to missile defense in the region.

14 Since signing the Space Situational Awareness Partnership in November 2010, Australia and the United States have promoted space cooperation, including the relocation of the U.S. C-band ground-based radar system and the Space Surveillance Telescope to Australia.

15 At the AUSMIN in September 2011, the two nations signed a joint statement on cyberspace and confirmed that, mindful of their longstanding defense relationship and the ANZUS Treaty, the two would consult together and determine appropriate options to address threats in the event of a cyber attack that threatens the territorial integrity, political independence, or security of either Australia or the United States.

16 The statement envisions that greater competition for resources and territorial disputes will increase the possibility of miscalculation and the potential for conflict in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions, and states that the two countries would further deepen their defense relationship to deal with this. Specifically, the statement sets forth: deeper interoperability; strengthened policy and intelligence cooperation; increased collaboration in science and technology, capability development, and defense industry engagement; and coordinated multilateral engagement.

17 In July 2014, Fan Changlong, Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission of the Communist Party of China, visited Australia, and held talks with Prime Minister Abbott. Minister for Defence David Johnston, and others. The two sides agreed to hold a U.S.-China-Australia tri-lateral joint exercise. In addition, Australia and China have regularly convened the Defence Strategic Dialogue since 1997. At the 18th Dialogue held in December 2015, Gen. Fang Fenghui, then Chief of the General Staff of the People’s Liberation Army of China, visited Australia and held talks with Australian officials, including Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin, Chief of the Defence Force, and Dennis Richardson, Secretary of the Department of Defence.

18 In August 2015, following up on the previous year, KUWARI 2015, the second survival training among the United States, China, and Australia, was conducted in northern Australia, with ten personnel participating from each country. In September 2015, Exercise Pandaroo designed to build teamwork, trust, and friendship between the Australian and Chinese forces was carried out in southeastern Australia, with ten personnel participating from each country. In November, two vessels of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) visited Zhanjiang, Guangdong Province in China, and conducted a joint exercise with Chinese Navy vessels including a live firing exercise. In January 2016, three Chinese Navy vessels visited Brisbane, Australia and conducted navigation training with ADF vessels.

19 In response to China’s announcement of the “East China Sea ADIZ” in November 2013, Minister for Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop issued a statement saying Australia has made clear its opposition to any coercive or unilateral actions to change the status quo in the East China Sea.

20 In addition, opposition parties and think tanks raised concerns over the fact that this Chinese company is thought to have close ties with the Communist Party of China and the People’s Liberation Army, and over the fact that the U.S. Forces that utilize Darwin Port were not consulted in advance. According to press reports, President Barack Obama requested Prime Minister Turnbull to provide advance notice.
3 Relations with India

In the Defence White Paper, Australia states that it welcomes India’s increasingly active role in the Indo-Pacific region, and that it sees India as a key security partner. Australia notes that it aims to further mature its defense relationship with India in support of their shared strategic interests.

The Australia-India relationship was elevated to strategic partnership in November 2009, and the two countries have regularly conducted strategic dialogues, mutual visits by senior military officers, interactions among military services, and mutual dispatches of students to military educational organizations. More recently, in November 2014, Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi visited Australia, marking the first visit to Australia by an Indian Prime Minister in 28 years. The two leaders agreed to extend defense cooperation to cover research, development, and industry engagement, to hold regular meetings at the level of Defense Minister and conduct regular maritime exercises, and to convene talks between each of their military services. Accordingly, in June 2015, two Indian Navy vessels made a goodwill visit to Australia, and in September 2015, the first bilateral combined naval exercise AUSINDEX 15 was conducted off the east coast of India.21

3 Relations with Southeast Asia and South Pacific Countries

In the Defence White Paper, Australia regards a secure nearer region encompassing maritime Southeast Asia and South Pacific as its strategic interest. In particular, Australia considers that instability and conflicts in Southeast Asia have the potential to threaten Australia’s security and economic relations with countries. Furthermore, Australia depends on maritime trade with Southeast Asian countries and maritime trade that transits Southeast Asia. In this regard, Australia perceives that the security of these sea lanes must be ensured alongside freedom of navigation. Based on this understanding, Australia seeks to make military contributions to support the maritime security of Southeast Asia and support the governments of South Pacific and other countries to build and strengthen their security.

Australia has been deepening its relations with Indonesia in the security and defense fields following the signing of the Lombok Treaty in November 2006, the elevation of their relationship to strategic partnership in March 2010, and the conclusion of the Defence Cooperation Arrangement in September 2012.22 In recent years, however, issues have emerged, including differences in their responses to stowaways from Indonesia, the case of wiretapping of the Indonesian President and others by Australia’s intelligence agency, and the issue of the execution of Australian nationals in Indonesia.23 Consequently, cooperative relations in the security and defense fields stalled intermittently between the two countries. Subsequently, in the second half of 2015, mutual visits by ministers and higher-level officials resumed, including the visit to Indonesia by Prime Minister Turnbull. The third Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting (2+2) was held in December 2015, and the bilateral relationship is seeing further improvements.

With Singapore and Malaysia, Australia carries out regular joint combined exercises in the South China
Sea and other areas under the framework of the Five Power Defence Arrangements. Australia considers that Singapore is its most advanced defense partner, and that they share Australia’s interest in a secure maritime trading environment. As regards Malaysia, Australia stations the ADF in Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) Base Butterworth, and contributes to maintaining regional security and stability through patrol activities in the South China Sea and the northern Indian Ocean.

Australia plays a leading role in assisting Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste, and the South Pacific countries in fields such as security maintenance, coping with natural disasters, and maritime patrol. In particular, in the field of maritime patrol, Australia still regularly deploys ADF assets to the South Pacific to assist with patrol activities. In addition, in June 2014, Australia unveiled a plan to replace the 22 patrol vessels it provided to these countries in the past.

With New Zealand, Australia has an alliance pursuant to the ANZUS Treaty. The two countries hold regular meetings by their leaders and defense ministers, and have maintained close cooperative relations in the security and defense fields through joint exercises and joint activities in the region.

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**Overseas Activities**

In the Defence White Paper, Australia identifies the following strategic defense objective: Contribute military capabilities to coalition operations that support Australia’s interests in a rules-based global order. In line with this objective, as of late June 2016, about 2,350 of Australia’s approximately 56,750 force strength are deployed and are conducting operations overseas.

In Iraq, to support the airstrikes conducted by the U.S. Forces against ISIL in northern Iraq, Australia began air-dropping humanitarian supplies in August 2014 and participating in combat missions such as airstrikes from October 2014. In addition, Australia has been advising and assisting the Iraqi Security Forces on the military front since May 2014. As of late June 2016, about 780 personnel (of which approximately 400 personnel are engaged in assistance in the United Arab Emirates), six F/A-18 fighter/attack aircraft, one E-7A early warning and control aircraft, one KC-30A refueling aircraft, among other assets are executing this mission.

In Afghanistan, since October 2001, approximately 1,550 ADF personnel on average have engaged annually in reconstruction assistance activities and the trainings of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), under the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). With the completion of ISAF’s activities in the end of 2014, about 270 ADF personnel now train, advise, and assist NATO-led Afghan forces.

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24 In October 2014, Exercise Bersama Lima was held in the Malay Peninsula and the neighboring waters and airspace, in which approximately 500 personnel, vessels, and patrol aircraft of the ADF participated. In Exercise Bersama Shield held in May 2015, approximately 380 personnel, vessels including a submarine, and patrol aircraft of the ADF participated.

25 See Part I, Chapter 2, Section 6-2, Footnote 10.

26 See Part I, Chapter 2, Section 3-6.

27 Australia has extended proactive assistance for the political and social stability of Timor-Leste since 1999, when the momentum for independence heightened in Timor-Leste. The ADF led the International Stabilization Force (ISF) since 2006, and with the stabilization of the security situation in Timor-Leste, the withdrawal of the ADF was completed in March 2013. In the Solomon Islands, the ADF extended assistance for their stabilization since July 2003 through the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI). The ADF withdrew from the country in August 2013, when the military activities of RAMSI were completed.

28 According to “Military Balance (2016).” The breakdown by service is as follows: approx. 29,000 Army personnel; approx. 13,550 Navy personnel; and approx. 14,200 Air Force personnel.