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PETER MITCHELL
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- To manage the development of RAN doctrine and facilitate its incorporation into ADF joint doctrine;
- To contribute to regional engagement; and
- Within the higher Defence organisation, contribute to the development of maritime strategic concepts and strategic and operational level doctrine, and facilitate informed force structure decisions.

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PETER MITCHELL ESSAYS 2003

Edited by Glenn Kerr
Sea Power Centre – Australia

The 'Papers in Australian Maritime Affairs' series is a vehicle for the distribution of substantial work by members of the Royal Australian Navy as well as members of the Australian and international community undertaking original research into regional maritime issues. Papers will be drawn generally from manuscripts not scheduled for publication elsewhere but that nonetheless merit extensive distribution. Candidates are considered by an editorial board under the auspices of the Director of the Sea Power Centre – Australia.

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Editor's Note

The material contained in the essays published in this volume was based on the authors' interpretations of information that was current at the time they were submitted for judging in early November 2003. Some information, particularly that related to operations in progress at the time, will no longer be current. Other material contained in these essays may reflect an incorrect understanding by the author of RAN structures, procedures or doctrine.

Some editorial amendments have been made to the essays, primarily to correct typographical or grammatical errors, and to impose a standardised format and referencing system. In all other respects, particularly with regard to facts, style and opinions, the essays are published as they were submitted by the authors.

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Abbreviations

AAT	Australian Antarctic Territory
AAW	Anti-Air Warfare
ACPB	Armidale Class Patrol Boat
ADF	Australian Defence Force
AFMA	Australian Fisheries Management Agency
AFZ	Australian Fishing Zone
AMD	Australian Maritime Doctrine
AMSA	Australian Maritime Safety Authority
ARG	Amphibious Ready Group
ASALF	Afloat Support and Amphibious Lift Forces
AusSAR	Australian Search and Rescue
C2	Command and Control
CATF	Commander Amphibious Task Force
CLF	Commander Landing Force
CN	Chief of Navy
CNMU	Customs National Maritime Unit
COMUKAMPHIBFOR	Commander United Kingdom Amphibious Force
DACC	Defence Force Aid to the Civil Community
EAS	Entry by Air and Sea
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
ESSM	Enhanced Sea Sparrow Missile
ESG	Expeditionary Strike Group
FBE	Fleet Base East
FBW	Fleet Base West
FCPB	Fremantle Class Patrol Boat
FEG	Force Element Group
FFG	Frigate, Guided Missile
FPS	Fishery Patrol Service
GPS	Global Positioning System(s)
HIMI	Heard and McDonald Islands
HMAS	His/Her Majesty's Australian Ship
HSIC	High Speed Interceptor Craft
IPV	Inshore Patrol Vessel
ITLOS	International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea

IUU	Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported
JCPAA	Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit
JFC	Joint Force Commander
LPA	Landing Platform Amphibious
LOSC	Law of the Sea Convention
MLE	Maritime Law Enforcement
MOLE	Maritime Operations in the Littoral Environment
MWF	Mine Warfare Force
OMFTS	Operational Manoeuvre From the Sea
OODA	Observe-Orient-Decide-Act
OOTW	Operations Other Than War
OPV	Offshore Patrol Vessel
ORBAT	Order of Battle
NORFORCE	Northwest Mobile Force
PB	Patrol Boat
PBR	Patrol Boat River
PTIS	Post Traumatic Incident Stress
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RAN	Royal Australian Navy
RFSU	Regional Force Surveillance Units
RMA	Revolution in Military Affairs
RN	Royal Navy
SIEV	Suspected Illegal Entry Vessel
SOLAS	Safety of Life at Sea
STOM	Ship to Objective Manoeuvre
TAC	Total Allowable Catch
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
USCG	United States Coast Guard
USN	United States Navy

The Peter Mitchell Essay Competition

Peter Stuckey Mitchell was born in Victoria in 1856. He grew up in the rural industry and like his father became a grazier on inheriting *Bringenbrong* station, Upper Murray, New South Wales. During his lifetime he became a successful cattle and racehorse breeder, and at his death in 1921 left an estate valued at £215,000, from which his wife was left an annuity of £5000.

Through his Will he directed that on his wife's death the net income remaining from his estate be formed into a trust account to be known as the 'Peter Mitchell Trust Fund'. The purpose of the fund was to provide prizes 'to encourage and help the capable, healthy and strong to develop...their natural advantages.' This section of the Will made provision for part of the income obtained to go to the navies and armies of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Due to lengthy legal proceedings that followed the death of his wife in 1954 it was not until 14 December 1970 that an agreement was made to compete for the awards as they are known today.

The Chief of Navy has been authorised by the Trustees of the Peter Mitchell Trust Fund to use the income available for various prizes. One of these is the prize awarded for the Peter Mitchell Essay Competition. This is an annual competition, open to members of British Commonwealth Navies of Commander rank or below, who are full time members, or reservists who have served at least 20 days in the 12 months prior to the closing date of the competition.

Under the auspices of the trust arrangements, three prizes are awarded each year:

Winner Overall, which can be awarded either to a sailor or an officer;

Winner Officers' Section; and

Winner Sailors' Section.

The selection of the winning essays is based on academic criteria, based primarily on the degree to which the members of the marking panel are convinced by the arguments put forward by the authors, rather than the degree to which they accord with Australian government policy or strategic direction. In some cases, and particularly for members of other Commonwealth navies, who are not bound by the administrative guidelines on public comment that apply to members of the Royal Australian Navy, the arguments put forward

may suggest courses of action that do not comply with current policy. Accordingly, the contents of the essays reflect the personal opinions of the authors, rather any official policy stance of the Royal Australian Navy.

The SPC-A has undertaken to publish selected Peter Mitchell Essay Competition entries to further debate on current maritime security issues of interest to the Royal Australian Navy and other Commonwealth navies, to place the essays in the public record as a further source of reference on the issues raised, to encourage the published authors to continue research and writing on such issues, and to draw attention to the competition to attract wider participation in subsequent years.

The 2003 Competition

The 2003 competition saw 28 entries from around the Commonwealth, including 11 from the Royal Australian Navy (10 from the Permanent Naval Forces and one from the Royal Australian Naval Reserve), 11 from the Indian Navy, two from the Nigerian Navy, one from the Sri Lanka Navy and three from the Pakistani Navy. Of the 28 entries, two were submitted by sailors of the Royal Australian Navy.

Five topics were offered in 2003:

- The classical naval strategists wrote their works many decades ago. How relevant are their concepts to medium power navies such as the Royal Australian Navy in the 21st century?
- Illegal immigration, fisheries and other constabulary functions have increasingly absorbed the Royal Australian Navy's operational capacity in recent years. Is the Royal Australian Navy adequately structured to meet both its warfighting and constabulary functions? If not, what structural and capability changes might be required?
- Forecasting 20-30 years, what maritime issues covered under the Law of the Sea Convention are expected to adversely impact on countries such as Australia and their regional interests, and how might they be overcome?
- The development of manoeuvrist theories such as Manoeuvre Operations in the Littoral Environment (MOLE) and Ship to Objective Manoeuvre (STOM) will challenge how the Australian Army does business. What impact, if any, will such theories have on the current Royal Australian Navy structure, missions and capabilities?

- Alliance and coalition operations have played a major part in Royal Australian Navy tasking in recent years. To what extent, and how, should interoperability influence future Royal Australian Navy force structure development?

The five subjects offered in the 2003 competition were selected primarily because they have been the focus of recent operations of the Royal Australian Navy or because they are developing issues that will challenge the Royal Australian Navy, and other Commonwealth navies, in the foreseeable future. The impact of constabulary operations on regional navies has been substantial in recent years, with a rise in illegal fishing, illegal immigration, and maritime crime. The need to strike a balance between high-level capabilities for warfighting and low-level constabulary capabilities will continue to challenge navies in a period of fiscal constraint. This challenge will be exacerbated by the continuing encroachment of coastal state control over the oceans under the Law of the Sea Convention and the expansion of the areas requiring regulation and policing. The seemingly plethora of peace operations and United Nations endorsed sanction operations in recent years also presents a challenge for Commonwealth navies, particularly as they increasingly involve multinational forces. Interoperability between navies is an issue involving both capability and doctrine development, and one that requires long-range planning to achieve good results on short notice operations. Emergent expeditionary warfare theories also challenge the way that navies do business, and require long-range planning to ensure doctrine and capability are developed in a timely fashion.

The essays were submitted under a pseudonym, to prevent any bias on the part of the marking panel. The standard of the essays was very high and the competition for the Officers' Section was particularly strong.

This Paper contains 7 of the 27 essays accepted in the 2003 Peter Mitchell Essay Competition, including the three winning essays and a cross-section from across the Commonwealth navies. The Royal Australian Navy extends its sincere thanks to the following entrants whose essays could not be published due to constraints on the size of this paper:

Commander Amjad Noor Bhalti, Pakistan Navy
Commander Anureg Bisen, Indian Navy
Commander Rohit Chaudhri, Indian Navy
Commander Indrajit Dasgupta, Indian Navy
Commander Raphael Onyekwere Osundu, Nigerian Navy
Commander Debesh Sharma, Indian Navy

Lieutenant Commander Vikram Bakshi, Indian Navy
Lieutenant Commander Charles Huxtable, Royal Australian Navy
Lieutenant Commander Arun Jyoti, Indian Navy
Lieutenant Commander Thulendra Kulatunga, Sri Lanka Navy
Lieutenant Commander Abhovy Kumar Singh, Indian Navy
Lieutenant Commander Shiv Tewari, Indian Navy
Lieutenant Ramprasad Abbaraju, Indian Navy
Lieutenant Phillip Johnston, Royal Australian Navy
Lieutenant Tom Lewis, Royal Australian Navy
Lieutenant Jayant Mahadik, Indian Navy
Sub Lieutenant Masood Ahmed Khan, Pakistan Navy
Sub Lieutenant Michael Rahilly, Royal Australian Navy
Sub Lieutenant R.T. Thusanthan, Indian Navy
Petty Officer Craig Dowrick, Royal Australian Navy

Classical Naval Strategy and Medium Power Navies

1

2003 Winner Officers' Section

Lieutenant Commander Katherine Richards,
Royal Australian Navy

Medium powers are said to lie between the 'self-sufficient and the insufficient'.¹ Despite their diversity and differences, Rear Admiral Hill suggests a common characteristic of medium powers is their aspiration for autonomy.² He states that a medium power seeks to 'create and keep under national control enough means of power to initiate and sustain coercive actions whose outcome will be the preservation of its vital interests'.³

A medium maritime power is one that aims to use the sea to enhance its autonomy and preserve its vital interests.⁴ The navy of a medium maritime power seeks to employ sufficient naval capabilities to achieve this end.⁵ How a medium power navy uses the sea to meet its objectives is the domain of maritime strategy.

The Royal Australian Navy (RAN) is an example of a medium power navy. Its maritime strategy is centred on a trinity of diplomatic, constabulary and military functions.⁶ Arguably, this strategy has its origins in the concepts of the classical naval strategists, most notably Alfred Thayer Mahan and Sir Julian Corbett.

¹ Hill, J.R., *Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers*, Croom Helm London, 1986, p. 20. Note: Hill considers Super powers are self-sufficient. He likens them to strategic monoliths – possessing the economic muscle, diplomatic clout and military might to defend their interests with their own resources. In contrast, small powers are insufficient. Hill suggests that small powers lack the necessary resources to defend even their most vital interests such as territorial integrity and political independence. Medium powers effectively occupy the middle ground in the strategic hierarchy of nation states.

² Hill, J.R., *Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers*, p. 27.

³ Hill, J.R., *Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers*, p. 21.

⁴ Hill, J.R., *Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers*, p. 48.

⁵ Goldrick, J., 'The Medium Power Navy in the 21st Century', *The Naval Review*, Vol 80, No 2, April 2002, p. 103.

⁶ Royal Australian Navy, *Australian Maritime Doctrine: RAN Doctrine 1*, Defence Publishing Service, Canberra, 2000.

Mahan has been described as an evangelist of seapower⁷ and a brilliant and influential naval theorist.⁸ Corbett has been described as a theorist ‘whom no modern student of maritime war can afford to ignore’.⁹

The aim of this essay is to explore the concepts of the classical naval strategists Alfred Thayer Mahan and Sir Julian Corbett and the relevance of their concepts to medium power navies. This essay will outline the key concepts of both strategists and examine the arguments surrounding the relevance of their concepts to medium power navies, such as the RAN, in the 21st century.

Mahan—His Concepts and Their Relevance

In 1890 Mahan, a serving United States naval officer and avid historian, published his most influential and celebrated work – *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History 1660-1783*. In this book, Mahan sought to demonstrate the effect of sea power upon the course of history and the prosperity of nations.¹⁰ The book met with critical international acclaim and established Mahan as the leading naval strategist of the *fin de siècle*.¹¹

In the years that followed its release, Mahan published some twenty books and in excess of one hundred and sixty articles covering a wide range of contemporary and historical maritime issues.¹² A common theme throughout his work was that the United States must develop its maritime power in order to achieve strategic greatness.¹³ In support of this theme, Mahan proposed a variety of different concepts ranging from grand strategy to issues of fleet tactics. However, a review of his major works indicates that he principally endeavoured

⁷ Crowl, P.A. ‘Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian’, in Paret, P. (editor), *Makers of Modern Strategy, from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1986, p. 467.

⁸ Sullivan, B.R., ‘Mahan’s Blindness and Brilliance’, *JFQ Journal*, Spring 1999, p. 115.

⁹ Till, G., *Maritime Strategy and the Nuclear Age – Second edition*, St Martin’s Press, New York, 1984, p. 43.

¹⁰ Crowl, P.A. ‘Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian’, in Paret, P. (editor), *Makers of Modern Strategy, from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1986, p. 450.

¹¹ Fr. ‘end of the century’ – of, relating to, characteristic of, or resembling the late 19th-century literary and artistic climate of sophistication, escapism, extreme aestheticism, world-weariness, and fashionable despair.

¹² Gooch, J., ‘Maritime Command Mahan and Corbett’, in Colin Gray and Roger Barnett (editors), *Sea Power and Strategy*, Tri-Service Press, London, 1989, p. 31.

¹³ Gooch, J., ‘Maritime Command Mahan and Corbett’, p. 31.

to advance ideas in two main areas.¹⁴ Firstly, Mahan sought to define the relationship between sea power and national greatness and secondly, he sought to establish some guiding principles of naval strategy and naval warfare.¹⁵

On the issue of sea power and national greatness, Mahan argued that a study of history revealed that the 'mastery of the seas had been a determinant of victory in war and of prosperity in peace'.¹⁶ To Mahan, sea power was the key to national greatness. Over the years, numerous commentators have debated the continued relevance of this concept. Needham suggests that, today, sea power must be balanced with a strong economy, a stable and responsive government, a developed industrial base and a highly capable military force.¹⁷ Sea power is not enough in itself to achieve national greatness.¹⁸ Extending this argument to medium powers, sea power should be considered as simply one of a number of measures that provides a means of protecting vital interests and enhancing autonomy. It is not a strategic planning panacea.

Mahan also proposed that the instruments of war,¹⁹ seaborne commerce and colonies underscored a nation's maritime dominance.²⁰ Relating these factors to medium powers, Mahan's instruments of war can be considered akin to modern naval capabilities. An effective naval force is clearly a prerequisite for control of the sea. However, beyond this idea the relative utility of seaborne commerce and colonies to a medium power navy requires further analysis.

In the case of seaborne commerce, the issue is not the relationship between a state and its maritime trade, but rather whether this trade is directly dependent upon naval strength for its existence and prosperity. With this in mind, Etzold contends that the traditional interplay of commerce and navies has been overturned as a result of changes in global power politics.²¹ He proposes that the free use of the sea for commerce and transit is today a matter of convention

¹⁴ Etzold, T.H., 'Is Mahan Still Valid?', *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, August 1980, p. 38.

¹⁵ Etzold, T.H., 'Is Mahan Still Valid?', p. 38.

¹⁶ Etzold, T.H., 'Is Mahan Still Valid?', p. 38.

¹⁷ Needham, W.D., 'Mahan?', *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, January 1993, p. 44.

¹⁸ Needham, W.D., 'Mahan?', p. 44.

¹⁹ Gough, B.M., *Maritime Strategy: The Legacies of Mahan and Corbett as Philosophers of Sea Power*, Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, Winter 1988, p. 56. Note Mahan viewed ships and bases as the instruments of war.

²⁰ Crowl, P.A. 'Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian', in Paret, P. (editor), *Makers of Modern Strategy, from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1986, p. 451.

²¹ Etzold, T.H., 'Is Mahan Still Valid?', *Naval Institute Proceedings*, August 1980, p. 41.

and usage and not national power and certainly not naval power as it was in Mahan's day.²² In the 21st century all powers are afforded the opportunity to pursue their commercial and strategic interests on the high seas.²³

On first inspection Mahan's concepts on commerce and navies appear somewhat dated when applied to the economic reality in which medium power navies operate. However, for medium power navies perhaps a modern take on Mahan's concepts would be to recognise the benefits of international conventions, which govern sea usage. Arguably, conventions like the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) serve to assist all states in protecting their vital interests at sea.

In the case of colonies, Gough states that a nation does not have to possess colonies to have naval power and greatness, and argues that forms of informal control can be equally as valuable as formal possession.²⁴ This line of argument is further developed by Bateman who suggests that alliance relationships, port access rights and cooperative approaches to regional security have now replaced the utility that Mahan once saw in colonies.²⁵ In a post-colonial world, perhaps the legacy of Mahan's colonial concepts for medium power navies is that they should seek to foster international engagement and alliance relationships to enhance their autonomy and protect their vital interests. For the RAN, these security objectives are explicit in the Defence 2000 White Paper.²⁶

Mahan also presented a variety of concepts relating to naval strategy and naval warfare. He considered that the purpose of naval strategy was to secure *command of the sea*.²⁷ However, today the concept of command of the sea is viewed as largely unrealistic in the face of technological advancements.²⁸ In particular, technology such as submarines and aircraft mean that it is no longer

²² Etzold, T.H., 'Is Mahan Still Valid?', p. 41.

²³ Etzold, T.H., 'Is Mahan Still Valid?', p. 41.

²⁴ Gough, B.M., *Maritime Strategy: The Legacies of Mahan and Corbett as Philosophers of Sea Power*, Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, Winter 1988, p. 56.

²⁵ Bateman, W.S.G., & Sherwood, R.J., *Principles of Australian Maritime Operations*, Working Paper No 265, Australian National University, Canberra, 1992.

²⁶ Department of Defence, *Defence 2000 Our Future Defence Force – Defence White Paper 2000*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 2000, pp. 30-31 and 34.

²⁷ Gooch, J., 'Maritime Command Mahan and Corbett', in Colin Gray & Roger Barnett (eds), *Sea Power and Strategy*, Tri-Service Press, London, 1989, p. 33. Note: Mahan defined command of the sea as 'the possession of that overpowering power on the sea which drives the enemy's flag from it or allows it to appear only as a fugitive; and which by controlling the great common, closes the highway by which commerce moves to and from the enemy's shores'.

²⁸ Royal Australian Navy, *Australian Maritime Doctrine*, p. 38.

conceivable to totally control the sea for one's own use or to totally deny it to an enemy. Consequently, command of the sea is now viewed as a relative, rather than absolute term²⁹ and in its place the term *sea control*³⁰ is now more often espoused as the fundamental purpose of naval strategy. For a medium power navy, sea control must be regarded as essential to mission achievement. With respect to the RAN, Vice Admiral Ritchie has argued that sea control 'is essential to do any military task away from the Australian mainland and even for many tasks that are within Australian territory'.³¹

Mahan also maintained that the control of maritime commerce, through command of the sea, was the primary function of navies.³² He believed that wars were won by the economic strangulation of the enemy from the sea³³ and that the stoppage of commerce compelled peace.³⁴ Today, Mahan's view that a navy exists solely to control maritime commerce appears somewhat myopic. As previously discussed, the traditional dependency between navies and commerce has yielded to the passage of time. Hence, for medium power navies, a broader view of naval functions is warranted in the 21st century when formulating maritime strategy. Rear Admiral Hill recommends such a view should focus on the 'levels of conflict'.³⁵ This approach has been largely adopted by the RAN, which incorporates a trinity of naval roles covering diplomatic, constabulary and military functions in its maritime strategy.³⁶

²⁹ Hill, J.R., *Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers*, Croom Helm London, 1986, p. 81.

³⁰ Royal Australian Navy, *Australian Maritime Doctrine*, p. 39. Sea control is defined as 'a condition, which exists when one has freedom of action to use an area of sea for one's own purposes for a period of time (sea assertion) and, if required, deny its use to an adversary (sea denial)'.

³¹ Ritchie, C.A., United Services Institute Presentation, 6 August 2003, p. 5.

³² Crowl, P.A. 'Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian', in Paret, P. (editor), *Makers of Modern Strategy, from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1986, p. 455.

³³ Gooch, J., 'Maritime Command Mahan and Corbett', in Colin Gray and Roger Barnett (editors), *Sea Power and Strategy*, Tri-Service Press, London, 1989, p. 34.

³⁴ Crowl, P.A. 'Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian', in Paret, P. (editor), *Makers of Modern Strategy, from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1986, p. 455.

³⁵ Hill, J.R., *Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers*, Croom Helm London, 1986, p. 85. Hill suggests that the levels of conflict cover normal peacetime operations, low level operations, higher level operations and general war.

³⁶ Royal Australian Navy, *Australian Maritime Doctrine*, p. 57.

Beyond the broader realms of strategy, Mahan's war-fighting concepts centred on two key principles. Borrowing heavily from Jomini,³⁷ he proposed that 'concentration was the predominant principle of naval warfare'³⁸ and he saw the fleet as an offensive weapon that had to be used aggressively.³⁹ Both these concepts have endured the passage of time and are considered by the RAN as two of the fundamental principles of war.⁴⁰

Arguably, these principles led Mahan to develop his thesis of the decisive battle. Mahan espoused that the concentrated fire of the battle fleet was the principal means by which naval power was to be asserted and that the enemy's battle fleet was the preferred target of such fire.⁴¹

On first inspection, the notion of a decisive battle between fleets appears to hold little relevance to modern medium power navies. However, whilst a Nelsonic vision of fleets exchanging broadsides is clearly archaic, the concept of battle per se continues to hold relevance. Rear Admiral Hill suggests that battle is a facet of higher level military operations that medium power navies should address.⁴² He postulates that battles occur once the 'tensions of sea use and sea denial have come to a head'.⁴³ He concludes that 'if medium power navies plan never to have a battle, they may get one on very unfavourable terms'.⁴⁴

No examination of Mahan's war-fighting concepts is complete without analysis of what some commentators consider are his doctrinal failings. These include his lack of support for *guerre de course* and naval artillery as well as his omission of army roles in the maritime environment.

³⁷ Crowl, P.A. 'Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian', in Paret, P. (editor), *Makers of Modern Strategy, from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1986, p. 457. Baron Antoine Henri Jomini, a Swiss contemporary of Clausewitz, wrote *The Art of War*. Like Clausewitz, Jomini served in the French and Russian armies, as a General of Brigade under Napoleon and later as a full General in the Russian army.

³⁸ Crowl, P.A. 'Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian', in Paret, P. (editor), *Makers of Modern Strategy, from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, p. 457.

³⁹ Gooch, J., 'Maritime Command Mahan and Corbett', in Colin Gray and Roger Barnett (editors), *Sea Power and Strategy*, Tri-Service Press, London, 1989, p. 34.

⁴⁰ Royal Australian Navy, *Australian Maritime Doctrine*, p. 22.

⁴¹ Crowl, P.A. 'Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian', in Paret, P. (editor), *Makers of Modern Strategy, from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1986, p. 458. Note Mahan advocated that 'the one particular result which is the object of all naval action, is the destruction of the enemy's organised force, and the establishment of one's own control of the water'.

⁴² Hill, J.R., *Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers*, Croom Helm London, 1986, p. 142.

⁴³ Hill, J.R., *Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers*, p. 143.

⁴⁴ Hill, J.R., *Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers*, p. 143.

Despite the great importance that Mahan placed on maritime commerce, he was not an advocate of a *guerre de course* strategy.⁴⁵ Mahan considered the practice amounted to 'abandoning any attempt to control the sea'.⁴⁶ He believed that attacks on merchant shipping, along with harassing raids and the defence of coasts and harbours were options to be pursued by a 'fleet in being'.⁴⁷ To Mahan the only effective way to address trade was to engage and defeat the enemy's fleet thereby making the sea untenable to merchant shipping.⁴⁸ History and technology have illustrated the fallibility of Mahan's concepts in this area. In both world wars, Germany's U-Boat fleet conducted a highly effective *guerre de course* campaign that arguably brought Britain to the point of the 'economic strangulation' championed by Mahan. For medium power navies, such as the RAN, attacks against shipping are today considered an integral facet of combat operations at sea.⁴⁹

Mahan's disregard for actions from the sea, such as bombardment by naval artillery or assault from amphibious forces⁵⁰ are also noteworthy as well as his scant attention to the interdependence of armies and navies in wartime.⁵¹ Crowl assesses Mahan's lack of appreciation of naval artillery was largely a result of his Civil War experience in which Union ship bombardment against Confederate coastal forts proved problematic.⁵² Mahan was also highly sceptical of the utility of amphibious operations in warfare.⁵³ He warned that such operations could reduce the navy to simply a branch of the army.⁵⁴ Finally,

⁴⁵ Gough, B.M., *Maritime Strategy: The Legacies of Mahan and Corbett as Philosophers of Sea Power*, Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, Winter 1988, p. 56. Note: *guerre de course* is the attack of merchant shipping.

⁴⁶ Crowl, P.A. 'Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian', in Paret, P. (editor), *Makers of Modern Strategy, from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1986, p. 459.

⁴⁷ Etzold, T.H., 'Is Mahan Still Valid?', *Naval Institute Proceedings*, August 1980, p. 41. Note Mahan used the term 'fleet in being' to describe the defeated naval fleet following a contest for the command of the sea.

⁴⁸ Crowl, P.A. 'Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian', in Paret, P. (editor), *Makers of Modern Strategy, from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1986, p. 459.

⁴⁹ Royal Australian Navy, *Australian Maritime Doctrine*, p. 57.

⁵⁰ Crowl, P.A. 'Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian', in Paret, P. (editor), *Makers of Modern Strategy, from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1986, p. 461.

⁵¹ Crowl, P.A. 'Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian', in Paret, P. (editor), *Makers of Modern Strategy, from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, p. 461.

⁵² Crowl, P.A. 'Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian', in Paret, P. (editor), *Makers of Modern Strategy, from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, p. 461.

⁵³ Crowl, P.A. 'Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian', in Paret, P. (editor), *Makers of Modern Strategy, from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, p. 460.

⁵⁴ Crowl, P.A. 'Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian', in Paret, P. (editor), *Makers of Modern Strategy, from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, p. 460.

Mahan regarded the navy as an autonomous agent, which acted independently of the army and its land campaigns. He considered that the navy was not affected by the outcome of land battles.⁵⁵

For medium power navies, Mahan's limited appreciation of power projection from the sea and the connectivity of land and sea forces significantly limits the relevance of his theories in these areas to the modern day. In the 21st century, combat operations from the sea are as much a part of maritime military action as combat operations at sea.⁵⁶ Furthermore, effective joint systems are considered essential force multipliers for any medium power navy.⁵⁷

In summary, Mahan's concepts of sea power and national greatness reflect an imperial mercantile world whilst his concepts of naval strategy and naval warfare are dominated by a theme of autonomous offensive naval action. A review of these concepts reveals that many continue to hold resonance, whilst others have clearly fallen victim to a changing world political order and technology.⁵⁸ For medium power navies, perhaps the relevance of Mahan is best summed up by Sullivan. He suggests that his enduring value 'is not to be found in dated notions of naval power and strategy. Instead it is his approach to thinking about threats and the use of force ... and ideas about the very nature of warfare that provide the classic worth of his works'.⁵⁹

Corbett—His Concepts and Their Relevance

Till notes that 'while the theories of Alfred Thayer Mahan are all very well in their way, the work of Sir Julian Corbett provides a much more appropriate foundation for speculation about the future of sea power in the 21st century'.⁶⁰ Corbett, a lawyer and an historian, came to the study of naval strategy late in life.⁶¹ He is best remembered for his book *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy* which was published in 1911. In this work, Corbett developed a number of

⁵⁵ Crowl, P.A. 'Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian', in Paret, P. (editor), *Makers of Modern Strategy, from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1986, p. 461.

⁵⁶ Royal Australian Navy, *Australian Maritime Doctrine*, p. 57.

⁵⁷ Goldrick, J., 'The Medium Power Navy in the 21st Century', *The Naval Review*, Vol 80, No 2, April 2002, p. 103.

⁵⁸ Etzold, T.H., 'Is Mahan Still Valid?', *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, August 1980, p. 43.

⁵⁹ Sullivan, B.R., 'Mahan's Blindness and Brilliance', *JFQ Journal*, Spring 1999, p. 118.

⁶⁰ Till, G., 'Sir Julian Corbett and the Twenty-First Century: Ten Maritime Commandments' in Dorman, A., Smith, M., & Uttley M.R.H. (editors), *The Changing Face of Maritime Power*, MacMillan Press, London, 1999, p. 19.

⁶¹ Gough, B.M., 'Maritime Strategy: The Legacies of Mahan and Corbett as Philosophers of Sea Power', *Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies*, Winter 1988, p. 58.

concepts relating to a general theory of war, the theory of naval war, and the conduct of naval war, all of which have degrees of relevance for medium power navies in the 21st century.

Corbett theorised that ‘strategy needs to be consciously related to foreign policy and naval strategy to land strategy’.⁶² In his theory of general war his central thesis was that ‘since men live upon the land and not the sea, great issues between nations at war have always been decided – except in the rarest cases – either by what your army can do against your enemy’s territory and national life, or else by the fear of what the fleet makes it possible for your army to do’.⁶³ Corbett saw that the ‘reward for being strong at sea was the capacity it conferred to influence events ashore – for that was where events were actually decided’.⁶⁴ This thesis led him to develop concepts that examined the role of sea power in the wider scheme of things.⁶⁵

Specifically, Corbett drew a distinction between maritime strategy and naval strategy. Corbett considered that maritime strategy was inherently joint in nature and focussed on the relations between the army and navy in planning war.⁶⁶ He asserted that maritime strategy related to the ‘principles which govern a war in which the sea is a substantial factor’.⁶⁷ In contrast, naval strategy ‘determines the movements of the fleet when maritime strategy has determined what part the fleet must play in relation to the action of the land forces’.⁶⁸ Unlike Mahan, Corbett did not see navies as autonomous agents. He viewed naval strategy as not a ‘separate entity but simply a part of the art of war’.⁶⁹

⁶² Smith, M. & Uttley, M.R.H., ‘Tradition and Innovation in Maritime Thinking’ in Dorman, A., Smith, M., & Uttley, M.R.H. (editors), *The Changing Face of Maritime Power*, MacMillan Press, London, 1999, p. 5.

⁶³ Corbett, J.S., *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, United States Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, 1988, p. 15.

⁶⁴ Till, G., ‘Sir Julian Corbett and the Twenty-First Century: Ten Maritime Commandments’ in Dorman, A., Smith, M., & Uttley, M.R.H. (editors), *The Changing Face of Maritime Power*, MacMillan Press, London, 1999, p. 29.

⁶⁵ Till, G., ‘Sir Julian Corbett and the Twenty-First Century: Ten Maritime Commandments’ in Dorman, A., Smith, M., & Uttley, M.R.H. (editors), *The Changing Face of Maritime Power*, p. 19.

⁶⁶ Corbett, J.S., *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, United States Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, 1988, p. 16.

⁶⁷ Corbett, J.S., *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, p. 15.

⁶⁸ Corbett, J.S., *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, p. 15.

⁶⁹ Till, G., ‘Sir Julian Corbett and the Twenty-First Century: Ten Maritime Commandments’ in Dorman, A., Smith, M., & Uttley, M.R.H. (editors), *The Changing Face of Maritime Power*, p. 20.

For medium power navies, Corbett's ideas on maritime strategy have proven to be lasting. Royal Navy doctrine⁷⁰ states that 'maritime power is inherently joint in nature. It emanates from forces drawn from all three services, both sea and land based, supported by national and commercial resources, exercising influence over the sea, land and air environments.'⁷¹ RAN doctrine maintains that 'the environments within which the services operate and fight are interconnected and cannot be considered in isolation'.⁷² Both doctrines clearly echo Corbett's thesis.

Beyond his concepts of maritime and naval strategy, Corbett's theory on naval war also warrants attention. Like Mahan, Corbett upheld the principle of command of the sea. He considered that the 'object of naval warfare must always be directly or indirectly either to secure command of the sea or to prevent the enemy from securing it'.⁷³ However, unlike Mahan, Corbett saw that the aim of command of the sea was to ensure the control of maritime communications⁷⁴ and not the total destruction of an enemy's fleet. To Corbett, command of the sea was a relative and not absolute concept. He saw command as being asserted in 'theatres' and used to prevent the enemy from 'disrupting one's own communications'.⁷⁵

Relating Corbett's communications concepts to medium power navies, Rear Admiral Hill asserts that the passage of shipping against opposition has been the most important single type of sea use operation in the two major wars of the 20th century.⁷⁶ Consequently, medium power navies should address it as an element of higher level maritime operations. For the RAN, the importance that Corbett placed on maritime communications remains apposite. As an island, Australia is fundamentally dependent upon the sea for communications.^{77, 78}

⁷⁰ Royal Navy, *Fundamentals of British Maritime Doctrine: BR 1806*, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Norwich, 1995.

⁷¹ Grove, E. 'BR1806, Joint Doctrine and Beyond' in Dorman, A., Smith, M., & Uttley, M.R.H. (editors), *The Changing Face of Maritime Power*, MacMillan Press, London, 1999, p. 59.

⁷² Royal Australian Navy, *Australian Maritime Doctrine*, p. 47.

⁷³ Corbett, J.S., *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, p. 91.

⁷⁴ Corbett, J.S., *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, p. 94. Note: Corbett viewed maritime communications as those that were required to support a fleet and an army overseas and also trade routes. See Eric Grove's introductory comments on page xx of the reference.

⁷⁵ Gough, B.M., 'Maritime Strategy: The Legacies of Mahan and Corbett as Philosophers of Sea Power', *Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies*, Winter 1988, p. 59.

⁷⁶ Hill, J.R., *Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers*, Croom Helm London, 1986, p. 137.

⁷⁷ Royal Australian Navy, *Australian Maritime Doctrine*, p. 45.

⁷⁸ Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, *Inquiry into Australia's Maritime Strategy*, Submission by the Australian Centre for Maritime Studies, 4 Nov 2002, p. 3 http://www.acmarst.com/parl_sub/sub_2002.htm. The paper states that the Australian economy is both directly and indirectly totally dependent on the unhindered flow of trade by sea.

To address this strategic reality, current RAN maritime doctrine upholds operations such as the interdiction of commercial shipping (to prevent an adversaries re-enforcement or resupply of deployed units), layered defence activities (such as convoy), and the naval control of shipping as fundamental aspects of combat operations at sea.⁷⁹

To ensure the control of communications, Corbett proposed a number of concepts covering the conduct of naval war. He advocated both decisive battle⁸⁰ and blockade as methods of securing command. For the latter he distinguished between close and observation blockades,⁸¹ arguing the utility of both against either naval or commercial forces. Apart from these offensive measures, Corbett also argued strongly for defensive measures. He maintained that defensive fleet operations such as a 'fleet in being' and 'minor counter attack' could be effective by holding command of the sea in dispute.⁸² He further proposed that in exercising command of the sea, a fleet should target defence against invasion, the attack and defence of trade as well as the attack, defence and support of military operations.⁸³

Like Mahan, however, Corbett's warfare concepts have not escaped criticism. Some commentators suggest that Corbett fundamentally underestimated the impact of the submarine, the value of convoys and the effectiveness of a *guerre de course* strategy.^{84,85} Despite these issues, Corbett clearly recognised the utility of both offensive and defensive operations, the importance of maritime trade, the requirement to defend the homeland and support army operations.

⁷⁹ Royal Australian Navy, *Australian Maritime Doctrine*, p. 58.

⁸⁰ Corbett, J.S., *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, p. 165. Note: Corbett said of decisive battle- 'Whatever the nature of the war in which we are engaged, whether it be limited or unlimited, permanent and general command of the sea is the condition of ultimate success. The only way of securing such a command by naval means is to obtain a decision by battle against the enemy's fleet. Sooner or later it must be done, and the sooner the better'. Refer to p. 167 of reference.

⁸¹ Gough, B.M., 'Maritime Strategy: The Legacies of Mahan and Corbett as Philosophers of Sea Power', *Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies*, Winter, 1988 p. 59. Note: A close blockade aims to prevent an enemy from putting to sea. An observation blockade aims to draw the enemy's forces out to sea in order to combat them in a decisive battle.

⁸² Corbett, J.S., *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, p. 209.

⁸³ Corbett, J.S., *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, p. 166.

⁸⁴ Gough, B.M., 'Maritime Strategy: The Legacies of Mahan and Corbett as Philosophers of Sea Power', p. 60.

⁸⁵ Gooch, J., 'Maritime Command Mahan and Corbett', in Colin Gray & Roger Barnett (editors), *Sea Power and Strategy*, Tri-Service Press, London, 1989, p. 44.

Goldrick states that medium power navies 'need to develop and maintain the greatest possible range of capabilities to provide the balance necessary to protect against threats in the maritime environment and provide their governments with the widest range of options'.⁸⁶ Perhaps, therefore, the true relevance of Corbett's warfare concepts for medium power navies is that he presented a multi-faceted approach to the subject.

In summary, Corbett's theories of war, naval war and the conduct of naval war all contain concepts which continue to hold relevance for medium power navies in the 21st century. Specifically, his views on maritime strategy, sea communications and naval war-fighting concepts appear as pertinent to modern, medium power navies today as they were nearly a century ago.

Conclusion

Alfred Thayer Mahan and Sir Julian Corbett were among the very first theorists who sought to establish the principles of maritime strategy. Over the years, Mahan's theories have been said to wear less well than Corbett's.⁸⁷ Mahan's studies of sea power and national greatness are indicative of this with their references to colonies and the dependent relationship between commerce and navies. However, for medium power navies in the 21st century, the value of these theories lies not in the attitudes of an imperial age, but rather in Mahan's attempt to define the relationship between a navy and its nation.

Mahan's exploration of naval strategy and naval warfare centred on the concepts of command of the sea and autonomous naval action. He viewed command of the sea as an absolute concept. It could only be achieved through decisive battle. Mahan also saw the primary function of navies was the protection of maritime commerce, yet he failed to value a *guerre de course* strategy. He gave little credence to the utility of naval artillery and the relationship between navies and armies. For medium power navies, technological change and a doctrine of joint warfare have clearly impacted on Mahan's tactical and operational applications of sea power.⁸⁸ However, some of his principles, such as the concentration of force and offensive action at sea, are as relevant today as they were a century ago.

⁸⁶ Goldrick, J., 'The Medium Power Navy in the 21st Century', *The Naval Review*, Vol 80, No 2, April 2002, p. 109.

⁸⁷ Gooch, J., 'Maritime Command Mahan and Corbett', p. 27.

⁸⁸ Gray, C.S., 'History for strategists: British seapower as a relevant past', in Till, G. (editor), *Seapower, Theory and Practice*, Frank Cass, Essex, 1994, p. 15.

In contrast to Mahan, Corbett believed that it was 'on land that human destiny was decided and it was where they had an impact ashore that navies were most influential'.⁸⁹ He considered that navies and armies were interconnected and hence discriminated between maritime strategy and naval strategy.

To Corbett, command of the sea was a relative concept. Its objective was the control of communications through either offensive or defensive measures. Though, like Mahan, Corbett also underestimated the impact of submarines and the inherent benefits of a *guerre de course* strategy. In Corbett's concepts the origins of joint warfare, power projection and sea control are revealed. Today, these concepts are embedded in the war-fighting doctrines of many medium power navies.

In the final analysis, this essay has demonstrated that though Mahan and Corbett wrote their works many decades ago, a number of their concepts relating to maritime strategy and naval warfare continue to hold relevance for medium power navies in the 21st century.

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⁸⁹ Till, G., 'Maritime strategy and the twenty-first century', in Till, G. (editor), *Seapower, Theory and Practice*, Frank Cass, Essex, 1994, p. 186.

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The Royal Australian Navy in the Twenty First Century— Strategic Thoughts

2

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In the course of its history and developments within the past two centuries, the term *naval strategy* has attracted numerous scholarly attention and definitions. Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan and, more remarkably, Sir Julian Corbett helped in demarcating naval strategy from its confusing representation with maritime strategy. While the more encompassing maritime strategy is fundamentally exploitative, naval strategy could be regarded as protective, pressure inducing and force projection oriented across geographic, economic, legal, military and diplomatic dimensions. The study of naval strategy easily evidences the view that past naval strategists drew much inspiration from past history of naval warfare, particularly from the successes and failures of naval powers. Interestingly, prominent strategic views of naval operations so far have emanated mainly from the big powers environment and perspective. Therefore, the fact that the contemporary maritime environment has proliferated with numerous medium and smaller navies necessarily demands a home-grown approach to modelling and employment of naval forces. The compelling diversification of maritime activities along physical, economic, military, legal and political dimensions, particularly in the post-Second World War era, further justifies the need to customise naval strategy.

For the Royal Australian Navy (RAN), its emergence within the past century into a complex and dynamic maritime environment with major maritime responsibilities has made continuous strategic update an imperative. Curiously, within the past decade, it has been interesting to watch Australia's strategic view of her maritime environment evolve from a position of 'no immediate threat'¹ to a conscious proactive stance on credible naval development as an instrument of national power. The articulation of a coherent *Australian Maritime Doctrine* (AMD) has been a welcome development in this direction.

¹ Sharpe, R. (editor), *James Fighting Ships 1998-99 - Foreword*, Janes Information Group Surrey, 1999, p. 86.

Before delving into the strategic thoughts of past naval thinkers, it would be instructive to aggregate the discernible generic components of strategy. A strategy could be seen not only as a plan of action aimed at achieving specific objectives, the plan component could be further interpreted in terms of resources, concept of resource deployment and employment as well as sustainability of the plan. While expatiating on the 'objective' component, Liddell Hart stated that 'the true purpose of strategy is to diminish the possibility of resistance';² in this case, resistance to attainment of national maritime objectives which a naval strategy serves. This component definition will be employed in this discourse that focuses mainly on the works of Mahan, Corbett and Gorshkov.

Alfred Thayer Mahan

Mahan's description of the sea as a wide common through which a navy must be capable of power projection and commerce protection has established its relevance. Along with Corbett, he emphasised command of the sea through *der tag*.³ Also notable among his strategic views are coastal defence and force multiplication through alliance formation. His emphasis on a fleet with offensive and defensive capabilities is agreeable, particularly for medium and big powers. In his exposé on the principal seapower conditions, Mahan categorised island nations, such as Australia, as those that did not have to divert focus away from the sea.⁴

While recognising that the days of absolute sea control are over, it would also seem that Mahan's view that the history of sea power is largely a military history can no longer be comfortably projected into the future of naval strategy. For instance, the wide acceptance and implementation of the Third United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III) has emerged as a strong factor in strategic calculations of littoral states and their navies.⁵ Essentially, the conventions tend to protect non-littoral and weak littoral nations. Rather than promote military confrontation, its provisions have laid the foundation for peaceful and orderly maritime exploitation. Medium and smaller naval powers could be described as the major beneficiaries of these

² Liddell Hart, B.H., *Strategy - 2nd Edition*, Penguin Books, 1991, p. 213.

³ Jablonsky, D. (editor), *Roots of Strategy Book 4*, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, 1999, pp. 48-51.

⁴ Jablonsky, D. (editor), *Roots of Strategy Book 4*, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, 1999, pp. 48-51.

⁵ Zelvin, L.K., 'Flying in The Littorals? Better Bring A Lawyer', *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, February 1997.

maritime legalities that seek to protect and demarcate their areas of maritime interests. Stemming from this legal dimension is the imperative of developing an effective policing capability which Mahan did not accord desirable recognition.

Julian S. Corbett

Julian Corbett's view, ably supported by Collin Gray and other thinkers, affirms the land orientation of naval strategy, and indeed, the employment of naval forces. His idea of transport, convoy protection, joint operations, coastal defence and amphibious warfare capabilities emanate from this view.⁶ He convincingly canvassed for strong offensive capability as the best form of defence while he offered acceptable explanations on the need to tone down on Mahan's ideas of *der tag* and command of the sea to limited war and local sea control.⁷ Futuristically, he warned against sole dependence on naval warfare history for strategic evolution. Rather, he emphasised technological development and maritime interests as key determinants of a naval strategy. Within the perspective of contemporary experiences, from the Falklands War to Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, it appears that his perception has stood the test of time.

The widely accepted doctrinal approaches of operational manoeuvre from the sea and development of expeditionary capabilities by the big and medium navies tend to justify the relevance of Corbett's view. Contemporary development of joint maritime warfare doctrine by navies confirms this orientation that may well be regarded as a pointer to the future of naval strategy.

Sergei Gorshkov

Admiral Gorshkov expanded the political value of a navy through the strategic development of power projection capability for both deterrence and diplomatic roles. He recognised the relevance of modern technology that constituted the fulcrum of his transformation of the Soviet Navy.⁸ In his impression, the navy is a graphic indicator of the level of the development of a country's economy. Historically, his strategic view was partly informed by Germany's defeat during the Second World War, which he attributed to the failure of the German surface fleet and air power to support their submarine action against the Allies. Along with recent naval strategists, such as Zumwalt and Stansfield Turner, Gorshkov drew much inspiration from the effects of technology on maritime warfare.

⁶ Jablonsky, D. (editor), *Roots of Strategy Book 4*, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, 1999, p. 159.

⁷ Corbett, J.S., *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, Longman, London, 1911, pp. 52-55.

⁸ Umbach, F., 'The Maritime Strategy of Russia: The Gap Between Great Sea Power Ambitions and the Economic Military Realities', in Schwarz J., Jürgen, W., Herrmann, A., & Seller, H. (editors), *Maritime Strategies in Asia*, White Lotus Press, Bangkok, 2002, pp. 175-177.

Unlike the surface capital ship idea of Mahan and Corbett, he opted for development of a long-range submarine fleet in his concept of sea control during the 30 years realisation of his strategic vision.

Regrettably, the posteriority of his expensive strategy revealed myopia on the critical importance of sustainability in the formulation and implementation of naval strategy. As the post-Cold War development later dictated, the practicability of an expensive navy vis-a-vis national economy collapsed with the demise of the Soviet political ideology and economy.⁹ As noted by Admiral A.V. Gorbanov, a former Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy, the Soviet Navy incurred considerable management inefficiencies and sustenance cost in its expensive embrace of naval technology under Gorshkov.¹⁰ This is indeed a worthwhile lesson for medium and smaller naval powers regarding the design of cost-effective force packages and sustainability. The RAN, like any other constrained navy in a democratic setting, must necessarily prioritise sustainability as a strategic imperative. In its *Sea Power 21* strategy, even the US Navy's recognition of sustainability has given rise to a more involving 'persistence combat power'.¹¹

Implications for the RAN

It could be inferred that the naval strategists examined were unanimous in their linkage of naval strategy with a higher grand strategy that dictates the employment of naval forces. Their Clausewitzian ideal is still regarded as a contemporary basic in the formulation of naval strategy. For medium and smaller powers that are financially constrained and politically challenged for relevance in the face of other competing national imperatives, they will need to continuously develop an adaptive and viable naval strategy. It is apparent that such a strategy must flexibly permit the use of naval forces as a means of achieving military, economic, diplomatic and psychological ends of national power aspirations. As revealed by an observer, the inability of the Russian Navy to make significant contribution to Russia's recent small conflicts has led to declining political relevance, funding restrictions and fleet reduction.¹² For a medium naval power, the value of this view lies in the strategic adaptation for political relevance of cost-effective acquisition and operations.

⁹ Umbach, F., 'The Maritime Strategy of Russia: The Gap Between Great Sea Power Ambitions and the Economic Military Realities', pp. 175-177.

¹⁰ Friedman, N. & Truver, S.C., 'It's what's Inside That Counts', *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, February 1997, p. 42.

¹¹ Clark, V., (Admiral, Chief of Naval Operations, United States Navy), Address on Sea Power 21 at United States Naval Institute 13th Annapolis Seminar, April 2003.

¹² Umbach, F., 'The Maritime Strategy of Russia: The Gap Between Great Sea Power Ambitions and the Economic Military Realities', in Schwarz J., Jürgen, W., Herrmann, A., & Seller, H. (editors), *Maritime Strategies in Asia*, White Lotus Press, Bangkok, 2002, p. 195.

As a political corollary, a prominent necessity in strategic planning of a medium power, such as the RAN, is alliance formation with friendly major powers. This would include a cooperative posture with contiguous navies having overlapping areas of maritime interest with Australia. For the RAN this concept is not historically and contemporarily alien, and it is still considered a desirable underpinning for a workable naval strategy.

In terms of acquisition and technology, the extent of the challenges before a medium power is perhaps better understood from the thoughts of Michael Handel who posits that 'A great power can first design its desired doctrine and then build and acquire the weapons best suited for the implementation of that doctrine. A small (weak) state has to obtain the weapon that are available to it and only then formulate its doctrine accordingly'.¹³

By implication for medium and smaller powers, optimal rather than grandiose acquisition is a critical criterion in strategic planning. Further to this realisation is the age long sensitivity of naval strategy to technological changes, as demonstrated by the events of the past two centuries. Perhaps Herbert Richmond's signature on naval strategy with platform size-capability linkage would have been more relevant today but for the dramatic influence of technology.

As noted in a big navy view by J.M. Robertson¹⁴ 'during the Cold War, military budgets were heavier in research and development and the best technology first went to the military before being adapted for civilian use. Today that situation is reversed. Much of the technology underlying the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) is derived from off-the-shelf electronics available to almost anyone with the money to pay for them.' He further stated that 'new technologies bring with them new vulnerabilities'. For a medium naval power the relevance of this realisation lies in a cautious approach to technology acquisition. Rather than an exclusive military industrial base, adaptive technology and origin of naval technological requirements from an economically beneficial civil industry are worthwhile challenges.

In another analysis of technological history, Friedman and Truver contend that 'we see such particular technology advancing along S-shaped (performance versus time) curves. At the low end of the 'S', the technology is little understood, so enormous effort buys little improvement in performance.

¹³ Quoted in Ekoko, A.E. & Vogt, M.A., *Nigerian Defence Policy: Issues and Problems*, 1990, p. 277.

¹⁴ Robertson, J.M., 'Sea Control Remains Critical', *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, April 1997, p. 81.

As comprehension dawns, progress is swift up the middle curve of the 'S'. Eventually, most of what can be done easily has been done.¹⁵ Intertwined between these technological factors is the historical imperative of avoiding the mistakes of the British in their visionary failure to develop crucial military technologies that she innovated at the beginning of last century. As Liddell Hart pointed out, it was ironic to observe that it was Germany and not Britain that developed armoured doctrine and tank forces.¹⁶ Yet the tank was introduced by the British during the First World War. In this wise, the RAN would need to strike a balance between the extremes of naval power technological dynamics. This calls for a mix of cost-effective approach, capability for accelerated technology acquisition and a force multiplier concept. Its acquisition plans would have to find a home somewhere along the 'S' curve. The worthwhile AMD recognition of quality manpower development towards achieving technological competence and operational efficiency perhaps needs no further emphasis.

From the operations perspective the strategic ideas on sea control, sea denial, and power projection appear to have found global acceptance as tested concepts. A broader view of maritime development indicates that progressive views of naval strategists coupled with geo-political and technological dynamics within the environment have tended to tone down *der tag*. Rather, land oriented littoral warfare and presence mission capabilities are more favoured. This development has been closely accompanied by remarkable improvements in the characteristics of maritime power such as mobility in mass, flexibility, surveillance and delivery reach, adaptability, and readiness.¹⁷ Increasing maritime use of air power coupled with the blurring and extension of maritime warfare into space and the electromagnetic spectrum clearly demonstrates the impact of technology on naval operations. In particular, the sea control concept, though crucial, is becoming more localised in geography and time. To this extent, the big powers response of battle space dominance is highly recommended for a medium RAN if it is to be relevant locally and in the wider Pacific theatre.

A cursory look at the global naval balance and related operations reveals that, while small navies are mainly confined within the limits of protection offered by maritime legal regimes, bigger powers are more inclined towards offensive power projection capability. An important lesson from past and recent maritime

¹⁵ Friedman, N. & Truver, S.C., 'It's what's Inside That Counts', *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, February 1997, p. 42.

¹⁶ Liddell Hart, B.H., 'The Inter-War Years 1919-39', in *History of the British Army*, Peter Young & J.P. Lawford (editors), GP Putnam's Sons, New York, 1970, p. 249.

¹⁷ UK Ministry of Defence, *BR 1806 - British Maritime Doctrine - 2nd Edition*, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1999, pp. 22-25.

conflicts, and indeed wars, is the growing relevance of sustainability in strategic planning. The dictum that ‘amateurs discuss strategy, professionals discuss logistics’ readily finds a humorous and intellectual relevance here. The implication of sustainability on naval strategy is far reaching. At the grand strategic level, a secured foundation for funding naval development and logistics programs must be established by the political decision makers. Such foundation would necessarily be integrated into a national plan. The commanders at the military strategic level are under obligation to provide flexible plans for platform acquisition, including strategic and operational sustainability.

As a strategic outlook, the RAN would need to strengthen its belief in the international maritime legal regime through development of capability for its observance, compliance and protection. It is under responsibility to provide itself as a national tool to influence neighbouring littoral states to do the same. Notwithstanding the UNCLOS III provisions, it is apparent that external threats to Australia’s interests and prosperity will most likely originate from its maritime environment. This fact has been ably recognised in the AMD. Similarly, as experienced in previous engagements, any military alliance obligation or naval diplomacy will require ocean transit and sea control. In the words of Admiral Vladimir Kuroyedov, ‘the next century (Twenty First Century) will be the century of the world’s oceans.’¹⁸ Within this spectrum, both overt and covert sea control capabilities are flexible necessities.

Remarkably, within the past three decades Australia’s merchant fleet has doubled in number and tripled in tonnage.¹⁹ For the RAN, this period has been characterised by replacement of the carrier fleet by smaller ships and submarines, delayed planning decisions, funding and industrial problems, and lately, the gladdening formulation of a compact AMD. Apart from the Ships Taken Up From Trade (STUFT) utility of the merchant fleet, there is the increasing demand on the RAN for effective protection of sea lines of communication and offshore assets. The current globalisation with attendant expansion in maritime trade will most likely increase this responsibility.

On power projection capability, there is the need to strike a balance between developing an appropriate naval capability or risk being a pawn in the international political game. The RAN must be prepared for active participation

¹⁸ Umbach, F., ‘The Maritime Strategy of Russia: The Gap Between Great Sea Power Ambitions and the Economic Military Realities’, in Schwarz J., Jürgen, W., Herrmann, A., & Seller, H. (editors), *Maritime Strategies in Asia*, White Lotus Press, Bangkok, 2002, p. 171.

¹⁹ Comparison of data in *Jane’s Fighting Ships 1969-70* (314 vessels, 0.8m tons gross) and 1998-99 (617 vessels, 2.6m tons gross).

with allied major powers in the protection of western political and economic ideals. In this wise, a carrier may be considered in future acquisition plans. The expanding multi-dimensional nature of maritime warfare dictates the RAN's development of an integrated and joint fighting doctrine with other Services. There would be the need for deeper attention to a joint fighting capability for better effectiveness and as a force multiplier. In the light of participation in recent coalition experiences, the RAN could consider more seriously effective approaches to giving and receiving training and technical assistance. This would include developing appropriate command and control structures for such multi-national engagements. The current Maritime Command structure is considered a viable basis in this regard. It is hoped that the RAN's Plans BLUE and GREEN flexibly address these contending strategic imperatives.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, it is apparent that a viable RAN strategy for the twenty-first century must dynamically fit into the overall national defence, maritime and security strategies. It must be based on real and perceived threats to Australia's enduring strategic interests as outlined in the AMD. Consequently, the core requirements of sea control with sea denial and power projection capabilities would need to be sustained and developed. The RAN's current recognition of multi-national, joint and integrated fighting capabilities must remain the focal point of operational competence. In the light of technological dynamics, its acquisition process requires cost and operational effectiveness analysis, while cheaper technology that can deliver desired results must be sought.

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Using a Hammer to Crack an Egg | 3

Winner 2003 Sailors' Section

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The traditional perception of a navy is based upon the concept of large groups of capital ships engaging in surface and sub-surface combat with similar opponents of similar capabilities. Aircraft carriers, battleships, cruisers, destroyers and submarines exist as the popular wider community concept of a maritime fighting force; certainly an image enhanced by the media and decades of Hollywood movie producers. The reality of Australia's example in the maintenance and efficient use of a predominantly 'blue-water' navy in the evolving twenty-first century is the rapidly changing focus of the employment environment of our fleet units in moving the primary focal roles of maritime combat and sea control to more pseudo 'coast guard' roles in the provision of humanitarian and law enforcement roles within the Australian territorial waters. There certainly exists a necessity for all members of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) to debate the exact future application of naval power in this scenario, in direct contrast to what is arguably, and alarmingly, a seemingly cumbersome and expensive use of major fleet units in undergoing operations far diverse from its primary roles and capabilities. This fact has the potential to become a budgetary and strategic management nightmare for the RAN.

The purpose of this essay is to examine the relevance of the application of major RAN combat units in fulfilling both primary combat roles and economic/territorial zone policing, and the efficiency and effectiveness of this present operational environment with movement to a total re-think of future RAN requirements for such duties in respect of equipment and personnel, with realistic and logical options offered as credible, sound solutions.

What Role the Warship?

Essentially, the RAN is established on a total force structure of *Force Element Groups* (FEGs), each a cluster of fleet units and assets designated to specified combat, command and support roles with inter-operability between each other as well as foreign, allied navies, a vital capability in today's environment. Surface, sub-surface, and air offensive and defensive capabilities are obviously designated to the two current RAN frigate classes, with amphibious-capable

sea-lift, command and control, replenishment, patrol, mine warfare and hydrographic survey and multi-role capable rotary wing aviation assets providing a maritime combat focus. The RAN also possesses a recognised deterrence potency in the Collins Class of conventional submarines.

In the conventional sense of theoretical operational application of the RAN fleet, the role of policing Australia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the Australian Fishing Zone (AFZ) is primarily delegated to the RAN's Fremantle Class Patrol Boats (FCPB), operating in direct cooperation with the Royal Australian Air Force's (RAAF) Maritime Patrol Group, and civilian law enforcement agencies, in the detection and interception of persons and vessels engaged in violating Australian waters. Overall, the RAN is structured and equipped to deal with a sea combat scenario set and ultimately win over any aggressor threatening Australian territory. In this structure of capability, the RAN represents the best example of a well-balanced maritime force. However, the recent occurrences of the infamous MV *Tampa* incident and the 'children overboard' affair of 2001, along with current RAN commitments in the detection of Suspected Illegal Immigrant Vessels (SIEVs) in the Indian Ocean, activities clustered under the broad definition of 'border protection,' highlight the use of major RAN combat and support units in roles that both detract from the vessel's primary roles and, expose personnel to facets of such operations which are not core employment roles or, indeed, intended operational focus and preparedness, legally, personally and organisationally. In addition to this rapidly developing humanitarian commitment comes enhanced policing requirements by Australia within the Southern Ocean and Antarctic reaches of the Pacific and Indian Oceans, to counter illegal fish poaching and to monitor unauthorised access of designated AFZs by foreign commercial vessels.

The ultimate test of the RAN in recent times has been the ability to deploy fast and well-equipped guided missile and patrol frigates with successful outcomes in humanitarian and policing operations. This aspect is contrasted by the re-tasking of the RAN's hydrographic survey vessels for SIEV interdiction, and the use of larger support vessels for such tasks. All in all, the RAN has been the recent subject of adverse publicity from these operations and certainly the overwhelming force used in chasing down small, dilapidated craft must be rationally questioned in a very volatile social climate and restricted defence budgets.

What Are We Protecting?

Australia, as a land mass surrounded totally by water, shares its maritime demarcation lines with no less than six neighbouring nations. The nation's total coastline perimeter exceeds 36,000 km in distance. Australia also

possesses territorial claims over external island interests in the Indian and Pacific Oceans including the Cocos/Keeling Islands, Christmas Island, Ashmore/Cartier Islands, Heard and McDonald Islands, Lord Howe Island, Norfolk Island, Macquarie Island and the Coral Seas Island group. It should also be understood that Australia administers significant territory in Antarctica. It is estimated that Australia's maritime regions exceed a total sea area of 2,000,000 square miles. The AFZ is a 200 nautical mile area around the continent in which legislation accorded by the federal government defines the permissible activities of private and commercial fishing. It should be noted that the AFZ legislation excludes waters of the Australian Antarctic Territory (AAT). The national EEZ is legislatively defined by its inner limit or boundary being the surveyed outer limit of the territorial sea; a line located 12 nautical miles seaward of the surveyed territorial baseline. The Australian EEZ's outer boundary is defined by an estimated 200 nautical mile point that evolves into a boundary from the territorial sea baselines, however, this feature is not consistent in relation to agreements and charters of cooperation and understanding with neighbouring nations.

A Case of Operational Overkill?

The RAN's current active tasks in commitment to the suppression of international terrorism and border protection of Australia have seen our major fleet units engaged in intensive and compounded serials of employment since 2001. In all aspects of these politically infused and publicly controversial episodes of the RAN's recent history, the visions of frigates and large support vessels 'bullying' illegal immigrants have created a controversial public image of Australia's naval involvement. Arguably, it can be perceived that the public concept of 'grey-hulled' warships engaged in their traditional roles has deteriorated as the ships are used for tasks for which they are not designed and operated. However, it must be rationally and constructively debated that replacements, in the form of vessels of lower crewing requirements, lesser armament and technology fits, and smaller, less maintenance-intensive hulls is a far more cost-effective option than using a guided-missile frigate. The concept of Australia raising a dedicated 'coast guard' maritime force has been a recent point of political debate in the Australian Federal Parliament and was a focal issue in the 2001 federal elections. Certainly a force similar to the United States Coast Guard (USCG) could be advantageous to Australian interests, however, this is not a realistically achievable scenario and the RAN remains the organisation responsible for maritime defence and must incorporate maritime policing as a function.

The 'Sea Police' Concept and Options for Role-specific Fleet Unit Acquisitions

In addressing an obvious problem of RAN equipment and personnel tasking in meeting policing and humanitarian commitments, while still maintaining the primary maritime combat role is ultimately to come to a perplexing crossroads of decision on where to focus. In re-touching on the politically-failed 'coast guard' concept, it should be possible to theorise and hypothesise on the ideal options of a specialised FEG for the RAN, purpose organised and equipped to deal with requirements of maritime policing, humanitarian-related duties, and support to the civilian agencies engaged in lateral support to maritime policing such as Customs and Immigration departments as well as reducing the RAAF P3C Orion fleet's necessity for patrol operations. The concept of a FEG dedicated to the specified para-military roles annotated above would include a defined grouping of vessel types based around the SEA 1444 patrol boat and encompassing core capability requirements for inshore, territorial EEZ outer boundary patrolling, and long-range 'loiter' patrolling in the Indian Ocean, Pacific and Antarctic approaches.

In addressing the requirement for inshore patrol and interdiction craft it would be assumed that small, fast, lightly armed craft possessing communications and electronics suites that allow interoperability with all agencies engaged in territorial law enforcement, would be the obvious agenda. Such vessels would operate at no more than 12 nautical miles to seaward with an approximate patrol range of 600 nautical miles and the capability of embarking small specialist teams such as Regional Force Surveillance Units (RFSU) and civilian police teams. The craft should be capable of utilising fuel and logistic support facilities in small boating harbours and marinas and should be of such basic technical fits to allow operation by localised naval reserve crews with minimal training, various sub-port divisions being raised to operate the vessels in various isolated ports and harbours in high-potential interdiction areas such as Northern, North-West and North-East Australia. This concept could realistically see craft maintained and operated from locations such as Broome, Dampier, Weipa, and Groote Eylandt, operated by local naval reservists with local knowledge of their area of operations.

The possible low-cost and historically trialed vessel concept could include options such as the *Swiftship* patrol vessel, the famed Patrol Boat River (PBR) as utilised by US Navy riverine forces during the South Vietnam conflict. Such Inshore Patrol Vessels (IPV) have been built as various hybrid units by Morgan City Builders of America for various South American navies. The design has a 'V'-shaped hull, displaces 17 tons, a length of 13.9 meters, beam

of 3.6 meters and a range of 600 nautical miles at a speed of 22 knots. The advantage of such vessels is that they are operated by a minimum crew of four with the capability of embarking eight fully armed and provisioned personnel, ideal for the insertion of NORFORCE patrols into coastal river areas inaccessible to vehicles. These vessels possess a rapid shut-down/start-up capability which allows them to closely support land patrols as well as respond to, and navigate coastal river systems with ease. The organisational advantages of such vessels are that they allow senior sailors command opportunities, are capable of being locally manufactured under license by small to medium boat-builders, and permit repair and maintenance contracts to be placed with local firms in the region in which the craft are based. It is rational to assume that the relatively low cost of such vessels could allow the RAN to operate up to twenty units from various ports. These vessels can be fitted with cost-effective, off-the-shelf electronics such as surface search radars and broad-band communications equipment. A similar, albeit more advanced option of IPV is the Damen *Sea Stalker 1500* class of High Speed Interceptor Craft (HSIC) as utilised by the Hong Kong Police Anti-Smuggling Task Force. This craft, although of similar equipment fit and crewing as the PBR, is capable of speeds up to 55 knots in Sea State 2, although the craft is an expensive option to the PBR. It is possible to concede that the Hong Kong Police usage of the *Sea Stalker* HSIC along with an Australian designed and manufactured HSIC displays the effectiveness and relevance of growing a seaward patrol and interdiction force.

The more obvious requirement for long-range vessels to undertake the taskings currently distracting our frigates and combat support vessels from their primary roles is of more priority. The procurement of long-range, all sea-state capable vessels is a definite necessity for the future of the RAN's structure in light of the increase of overt and covert penetration of Australia's EEZ. In this aspect it may be wise for the RAN to examine the range of proven Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPV) types available. In cost considerations, a single vessel type is desirable with enhanced capabilities of prolonged 'loiter' patrol operations in all oceans within Australia's interests and multi-mission tasking capability and adaptability. The ideal design concept can be found in the excellent Finnish *Tursas* class of OPV. This is a vessel that was designed for coast guarding operations in the Baltic but is almost certainly capable of operations in tropical waters and the Antarctic reaches with modifications to crew habitability and environmental control systems. The *Tursas* class displaces 1,100 tons with a length of 57 metres and a beam of 11 metres. It possesses a range of 2000 nautical miles at a speed of 15 knots. These ships are fitted with bow and stern thrusters which makes for improved manoeuvrability in all scenarios. They are

capable of equipment fits for all maritime policing roles including search and rescue, long-range interdiction, incident scene command and control and even tug-towing operations with a 30 ton bollard pull. The *Tursas* are capable of embarking a number of rigid inflatable craft and certainly in the recent scenarios of RAN involvement in the apprehension of SIEVs, such a capability in an OPV is obviously far more cost-effective than the use of a guided missile frigate. There exist other suitable classes of OPV such as the *Sigma* and *Dorado* class of modified fishing trawler as used by the Falklands Islands Fishery Patrol Service (FPS), capable of all-ocean operations in maritime policing roles, with maximum crew complements of 30 to 40 personnel as opposed to the commitment of combat vessels with crew complements in excess of 160.

To Train the Warrior or the Coast Guard?

Like the perceptions of ship roles and types, naval personnel are also affected by the evolving diversification and detracting from primary combat roles. Prior to the present illegal entrant crisis gripping Australia's territorial region, officers and sailors of the RAN were trained and exercised primarily for surface and sub-surface combat and support. The necessary national maritime constabulary tasks was the primary duty of the RAN's patrol boat squadrons who manned the former *Attack* class and the present *Fremantle* class patrol boats from the late 1960s into the 21st century. The challenge now facing the RAN is managing the results and ramifications of large numbers of personnel who have been actively involved in the conduct of 'border protection' duties that have, by nature of event, been beyond the routine level of professional focus and, more alarmingly, resulted in adverse psychological aspects of exposure to stressful humanitarian scenarios with delayed potential for onset of Post-Traumatic Incident Stress (PTIS) and other psycho-symptomatic illnesses with chronic potential. The above issue is coupled with the underlining factors of RAN personnel who are junior in rank and status being potentially subjected to legal action and even criminal proceedings under international humanitarian laws, due to improper applications of language and physical force against 'aliens' engaged in broadly defined illegal activities in Australian waters.

The basic and obvious question to come from this alarming summary is - 'How does a primarily combat-focused naval personnel force adapt and train to cope with the scenario of intercepting a leaking, unseaworthy boat full of poorly-nourished and hysterical foreigners undertaking desperate actions as a plea to gain access to Australia?' In rational terms, we must revert to the concept of minimising the numbers of personnel involved in maritime constabulary

tasks and the procurement of appropriate role-suitable patrol and interdiction vessels is an obvious commencement point. The next apparent requirement is to carefully select, both professionally and psychologically, suitable personnel from the categories and branches required to man an IPV/OPV FEG. The specialist training requirement for IPV/OPV crews should revolve around core necessities of multi-language and cultural awareness training; the content to be ascertained by cross-sectioning the prevalent unauthorised boat arrival nationalities likely to be encountered attempting to illegally enter Australian waters. The relevant ADF language school facilities are entirely capable of coordinating and implementing such a program. The more challenging and politically sensitive requirements for personnel preparation for maritime law-enforcement is the training in diverse legal, medical and policing subjects to ensure that, for example, ships boarding parties, are fully aware of their legal limitations and responsibilities in interdicting and apprehending criminal activities of either an aggressive and/or passive nature. In this aspect, personnel should undertake tailored training programs within federal and state police and correctional services to ensure repeats of allegations of intimidation and excessive use of force by RAN personnel do not manifest in the future.

On a more sensitive focus is the necessity for the RAN to manage those personnel who, over a relatively short period of exposure to humanitarian operations, may suffer adverse psychological symptoms with potential for developing into long-term chronic illnesses. Again, the RAN must investigate the probability of this occurrence and actively consult with civilian authorities skilled in the management of conditions such as PTIS. The RAN and the wider ADF community have commenced actively addressing this issue however it is pertinent to remark that a small exposure quantity of traumatic stress can eventuate into a long-term chronic problem for some personnel. A responsible level of peer support and incident debriefing program is a must.

Summary

In addressing all aspects of the RAN and its current and future roles in maritime policing, it is obvious that a complete re-think of both equipment and personnel issues is a priority to avoid future overkill and inappropriate employment of equipment and personnel. It should be realised that we are only a few generations removed from the era when Royal Navy (RN) officers were trained in sketching and painting in order to record enemy ships and coastal fortifications. Once again traditional naval roles are being challenged.

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Constabulary Operations | 4

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The use of the sea has been a vital element in the economic well being and security of a significant portion of mankind since humanity first realised the boundless potential of its use. Accompanying the recognition that the sea no longer constituted an inaccessible environment, human beings began exploring means of exploiting its resources and its use as a medium of transportation. Initially, cargo traders were armed in order to protect themselves in areas where order was minimal and to prevent adversaries from interfering in the supply of vital commodities. Once the truly unarmed merchant ships optimised the transportation of cargo, Rear-Admiral Raja Menon of the Indian Navy notes that the business of fighting at sea was left to the warship. Naval vessels continue to remain the primary and preferred maritime platforms in the current evolving international security environment, yet maritime effectiveness in the modern era requires the capability to simultaneously operate on and under the surface, in the air, from the shore, and in space.

Australia is basically an island nation and maritime superiority is extremely important for its overall defence strategy. Australia has offshore territories with little strategic and economic value, but the area of primary strategic importance is the sea because of significant sea transportation requirements. The sea is also a natural resource, containing oil, gas and marine life.

Australia has adopted a maritime defence policy that seeks to engage an aggressor in the sea-air gap in the northern approaches. The Navy is structured to operate across the conflict spectrum as reflected in its mission, which is to:

- be able to fight and win in the maritime environment as an element of joint or combined forces,
- assist in maintaining Australia's sovereignty, and
- contribute to the security of its region.

The concept of the balanced fleet becomes important when considering the structure, equipment and roles that can be undertaken by a navy. A balanced fleet is a force that can be generated and sustained with a wide range of capabilities, which provide the government a number of possible options to

meet the strategic goals required to meet national security interests. Australia faces significant security challenges due to its vast coastline, large maritime jurisdictional area and distance from maritime allies. Australia shares maritime borders with Indonesia, East Timor, Papua New Guinea, New Zealand, the French territories and the Solomon Islands. Australia's 200 nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) contains valuable fishing stocks and immense mineral and energy reserves.

- The oil and gas industry is worth \$8 billion a year, the majority of the reserves are either found offshore or transported in ships. In 1997-98 the commercial fishing industry was the nation's fifth largest primary industry.
- The seafood sector alone employs 90,000 people.
- 81 per cent of Australia's catch is exported, mostly to Asia.
- Recreational fishing is a \$3 billion a year industry.

With island territories extending from the tropics to the hazardous Antarctic waters of the Southern Ocean, the Navy's responsibilities range well beyond the immediate region, covering an area of 16 million square kilometres. In total, the Navy patrols a jurisdictional area of almost 10 per cent of the world's total surface area, requiring ships with high endurance and excellent sea-keeping qualities.

The growing importance of the sea in the Asia Pacific region is reflected in the rise of regional naval power. China, India, and Singapore in particular are developing impressive capabilities to support their national goals. Sophisticated weaponry such as submarines and supersonic anti-ship cruise missiles are entering service in many regional maritime forces.

Australia, for its part, aims to promote stability in the Asia Pacific region. The Australia Defence Force (ADF) has a vital role in this objective. International exercises and training with regional armed forces develop professional skills and increase mutual understanding with surrounding nations. At the same time the ADF stands ready to undertake operations to promote or restore peace and stability under United Nations or regional auspices. In recent years the tempo and complexity of these operations has increased and this trend seems likely to continue.

The primary objective of Australia's Defence Policy is to prevent or defeat attacks on Australia. Its geography and reliance on the sea for trade make it not surprising that the Government has adopted a Maritime Strategy as a cornerstone of the nation's defence.

Navies are, by their nature, flexible and multipurpose, able to contribute to regional and global security measures and peacetime national tasks. Effective maritime forces give the Government flexibility in controlling escalation of events and facilitating diplomatic initiatives needed to restore stability. A high degree of operational readiness and autonomy is required of the fleet as demand for these tasks is often on a ‘no notice’ basis. Aside from combat activities, Navy’s provision of sea transport is essential for the movement of the ADF’s non-air deployable heavy equipment and stores. Navy must therefore adopt a wide spectrum of operational capabilities that cater for the range of circumstances that might confront the ADF in the short, medium and long term future, from peace to war.

Australia’s Maritime Strategy is a Joint strategy involving both the Army and the Air force. This approach combines capabilities of the three services to maximise combat power. The basic tasks of maritime forces are shown in Figure 1.

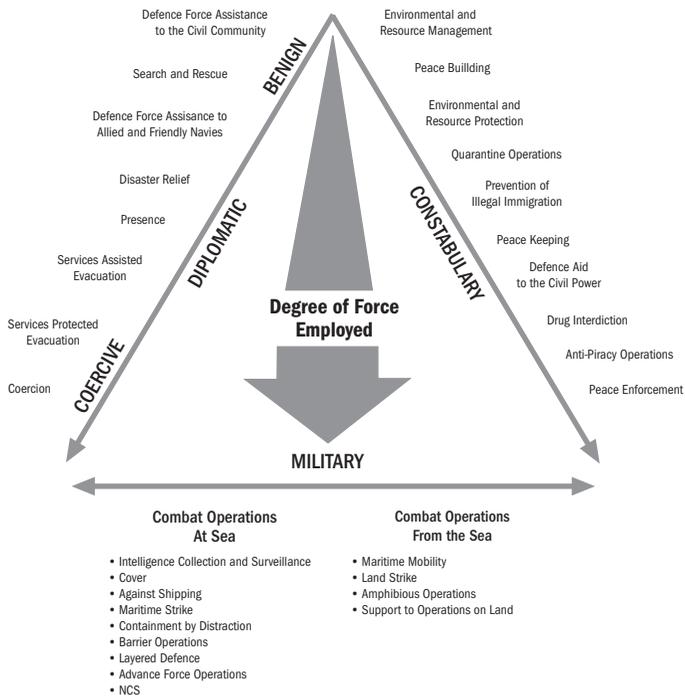


Figure 1: Roles of Maritime Forces

Role of the Royal Australian Navy

The possible tasks that the Australian Navy has undertaken recently include:

- environmental and resource management/protection;
- peace building, peace keeping and peace enforcement;
- border protection, including the prevention of illegal immigration, drug interdiction and quarantine operations;
- search and rescue;
- safety of navigation; and
- defence aid to the civil community (DACC).

The background to Navy's involvement in some of these tasks and examples are provided below.

Environmental and Resource Management and Protection

Australia's oceans and marine life is based on the ecologically sustainable development of the oceans. The major goal of *Australia's Oceans Policy* is 'to exercise and protect Australia's rights and jurisdiction over offshore areas, including offshore resources', and this has a major impact on Navy, as there are a range of measures relating to surveillance and enforcement inherent in this policy 'effective surveillance and enforcement within Australian maritime jurisdiction is fundamental to protecting our national interests and the Government will continue its assertion of our sovereign interests in this area.'

The major contribution of the Patrol Boat Force is assisting the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) with the fisheries compliance program. Under the program there are three considerations: domestic licensed vessels, foreign licensed vessels, and unlicensed vessels. Surveillance in the Australian Fishing Zone (AFZ) is to monitor both licensed and unlicensed (illegal) fishing activity. Surveillance of licensed foreign vessels is relatively simple as they are known, are required to report their positions regularly and are subject to pre- and post-fishing inspections at ports. However, what is also required is the ability to respond at sea to issues arising from the surveillance. Licensed foreign fishing vessels can be inspected at sea but the major concern is an adequate at-sea response to the illegal fishing. Australia is also experiencing the increased impacts of high seas fishing adjacent to the AFZ, and often the surface combatants are detailed to investigate and intercept. The South Tasman Rise Fishery lies south of Tasmania between longitudes 46°30' south and 48°30' south which straddles the AFZ. Australia

claims the right to manage the orange roughy fishery as a straddling stock, as all available scientific evidence is that the fishery straddles the Australian AFZ boundary.

Australia's offshore territories also have an EEZ that must be monitored and enforced:

- In the Indian Ocean are Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, 2800km and 3700km west of Darwin respectively, and Heard and McDonald Islands, about 4000km south west of Perth.
- In the Pacific Ocean are Lord Howe Island, 700km north east of Sydney, and Norfolk Island, about 1500km east of Brisbane.
- In the Southern Ocean is Macquarie Island, about 1500km south east of Hobart.
- There is also the Australian Antarctic Territory comprising 42 per cent of the Antarctic landmass.

The distance from Australia's mainland to these offshore fisheries makes their surveillance and the interception of any intruder problematic. The Southern Ocean fisheries are a unique problem given their distance from Australia and the environmental conditions in those areas. This task is either allocated to the surface combatants (with tanker support) or contracted to civilian ships. While a civilian charter would seem preferable to using an expensive to operate and maintain warship, only a warship has the legal authority to provide armed force to deter or stop illegal activity. However, while the major surface combatants are built to absorb battle damage, they are not built to absorb the mountainous seas in the Southern Ocean for prolonged periods. This means that the Southern Oceans do not have an adequate level of surveillance or interception capability. While chartered civilian ships can patrol the area, they are not armed and therefore cannot force an illegal fishing vessel to cease its operations and return to the Australian mainland.

Peace Building, Peace Keeping and Peace Enforcement

The majority of Navy's Force Element Groups (FEG) can contribute to peace building, peace keeping and peace enforcement. The Navy contribution to the United Nations (UN) sanctioned operation in East Timor should be well known, with the surface combatants undertaking ship escort duties, using their sensors to provide battle space awareness for the commander on the ground, and providing helicopter or naval gunfire support to the troops on the ground. The Afloat Support and Amphibious Lift Forces (ASALF) transported

and supported the troops on the ground, as well as other navies. The Hydrographic Service undertook surveys, while the Mine Warfare Force (MWF) was involved in mine clearance. The surface combatants have been regularly deployed to the Persian Gulf to enforce UN sanctions against Iraq since 1990, and are currently deployed there with an LPA (amphibious transport) commanding the operation as part of the Australian commitment to the War on Terrorism.

Border Protection

The legislation governing migration to Australia is the *Migration Act 1958* and its associated regulations. There are two types of illegal immigration by sea. The first type is overt, where boats land at Christmas Island or Ashmore Reef (320km north of Western Australia and 160km from Indonesia). Interception off Ashmore Reef often means that the patrol boats have to rescue the illegal immigrants, as there are no facilities on the reef. The illegal immigrants are usually from the Middle East and are intent on claiming refugee status. The second type is covert where boats try to land undetected on the Australian mainland, and are predominantly Chinese.

Search and Rescue

Australia is a signatory to the International Safety of Life at Sea Convention 1974 (SOLAS) and the International Search and Rescue Convention 1979, and is responsible for search and rescue over a vast area of the Indian, Pacific and Southern Oceans. The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) coordinates air and sea rescue over a 47-million square kilometre area, through Australian Search and Rescue (AusSAR). Where SAR incidents are at a distance from the Australian coast ADF assets are normally requested to assist. The Navy has been heavily involved in SAR operations. The naval aviation force has been used both ashore and at sea, while the major surface combatants and the patrol boats provide extensive support.

Safe Navigation

Under SOLAS, Chapter V includes details on the safety of navigation. The current version of SOLAS does not specify government responsibility for producing hydrographic charts, but a 1983 resolution referred to the importance of charts and invited governments to conduct surveys and distribute charts, while a 1985 resolution urged governments to establish hydrographic or charting groups. A revised Chapter V was adopted at the end of 2000 and came into effect on 1 July 2002, which places the responsibility for safe navigation within their maritime zones on the coastal States.

Defence Aid to the Civil Community

This role can include a number of tasks, of which the protection of oil/gas platforms and assistance with natural disasters are the most recognisable. In 1976 the Navy was given responsibility for the protection of the offshore oil platforms in the Bass Strait (20-80km offshore of Victoria), which is a part of Australia's territorial sea. While the offshore oil installations are vulnerable to sabotage, extortion or terrorism, the most relevant issue is actually a safety at sea issue, to ensure that ships do not collide with the rigs. In the late 1970s 3 of the 12 patrol boats were devoted to continuous surveillance of the Bass Strait oil rigs. In the early 1980s, patrolling in Bass Strait had been reduced to one patrol boat on continuous operations in the area. By the mid 1980s the commitment was reduced from a continuous presence to a program of not less than 33 ship visits annually, with the purpose of warning off shipping that might encroach the oil platform safety area.

Navy Capacity

The Patrol Boat Force (PBF) devotes 1800 patrol days per year to maritime surveillance to monitor and enforce Australia's sovereignty and sovereign rights, although during 1999-2000 there was a reorientation of patrol boat tasking from fisheries management to immigration response. As an example of the workload facing the patrol boat crews, if the 1800 days is spread across the 15 patrol boats, that equates to about 120 days at sea on maritime surveillance tasks per boat. However, boat maintenance requirements add an extra 130 days a year, while Navy exercise and training commitments and regional engagement requirements can add up to another 100 days per year. When considered against the Navy's personnel policy operational tempo, which tries to limit the time at sea to 150 days a year, it is apparent that there are problems with the demands placed on the crews of the PBF. At an operational level, the 1800 days equates to about 4-5 vessels deployed at any one time, with the 1800 days spread between actual patrol time and as an operational response vessel in port on 4-8 hours notice to sail. Another important factor is that it might take up to 4-5 days to escort an illegal fishing vessel back to an Australian port, which means that the patrol boat cannot be assigned to another interception. Notwithstanding the issues surrounding the PBF, the Navy faces a much greater general problem with concurrency. Since the operation in East Timor, the ADF, and in particular the Navy, is operating at its highest activity level since WWII. The Navy is operating in the Persian Gulf and other areas as part of the War on Terror, is committing a sizeable force to border protection operations and has a range of other tasks that must also be met. In order to gain an impression of Government requirements for border protection while meeting other requirements, the

hydrographic ships have been re-tasked to border protection instead of hydrographic survey. The issue has become one of hull numbers in the water. The situation has been exacerbated by the planned upgrade to the *Adelaide* Class FFGs, programmed over the next few years, impacting on FFG availability. The *Anzac* Class frigates are still being delivered, with those still under construction being upgraded and those currently in the fleet planned for a retro-fit of enhanced capabilities. Resources and time also need to be devoted to the process of accepting into naval service each new ship as it is delivered. There is growing recognition that the Navy is being stretched quite thinly, while programmed ship deliveries will not necessarily provide a quick solution.

Recommendations for Structural and Capability Changes

If we compare the assigned task with the existing structure of the Australian Navy, the following weaknesses, with suitable recommendations, emerge:

- The Australian main bases, Fleet Base East (FBE) and Fleet Base West (FBW), are strategically located. Their locations in Sydney and Perth are convenient for east and west coast operations respectively and the two northern bases are well situated for patrol duties. The One Base-One Ship policy is flawed. Imagine an FFG, now all stationed in Sydney after the *Anzac* Class are constructed, breaks down off the west coast. If the ships are not in FBW then they have to wait for the force to come. Each port should have a mixture of platforms and should be capable of being self reliant in terms of maintenance. The logical location for an amphibious fleet is to the north, **not** Sydney or Perth.
- The *Adelaide* Class FFGs are among the most powerful warships in South East Asia. Along with a fleet of *Anzac* Class frigates and *Collins* Class submarines they provide a surface and sub-surface fleet. A weakness here is the lack of medium to long-range fleet anti-air warfare (AAW) defence and, as the Falklands War demonstrated to the Royal Navy, the RAN cannot afford to let any aircraft or missile get close enough to the fleet to do harm.
- For protection of shipping, offshore territories and resources the *Huon* Class mine hunter is a modern design that drastically improves the mine hunting capability of the RAN. The RAN does not have mine hunters deployed on the west coast, to help protect vital interests and sea lanes in the region, and this should be rectified.
- Maritime patrol and response again is a role that the RAAF dominates with their P-3C *Orion* aircraft. The fleet of 15 *Fremantle* Class vessels has sufficient armament and range. The current *Fremantle* Class patrol boats are fine for short haul coastal operations, but with increased security

concerns in the region and indeed increasing incursions by illegal immigrants, the RAN is lacking a larger vessel capable of staying further out for longer, providing more firepower, and possessing organic surveillance in the form of a helicopter.

- In reference to the air defence in maritime areas and northern approaches, the RAN's AAW capability is limited to the Standard SM-1 missile, which has limited range. The RAN is going to install the Enhanced Sea Sparrow Missile (ESSM) in both major combatants. This missile will give the individual vessels self-defence capabilities. Once again the fleet is lacking a sophisticated medium- to long-range AAW umbrella, and for operations outside the range of the RAAF, this is vital, along with some form of organic air defence.
- To protect Australian fishing waters, current patrol boats in the RAN are adequately armed for this role. The proposed replacement, which will require a helicopter pad, would be a Patrol Corvette with a large increase in capability. There are clearly not enough vessels to patrol the required area and, in fairness, the Navy should not be performing this duty anyway. This is a task that should be performed by a dedicated coastguard force.
- When we consider that, apart from Britain, Australia is the only significant maritime nation in the world that uses its defence forces for offshore law enforcement, it is pretty obvious that the need for a dedicated coastguard for Australia does exist. Before we can consider an increase in the capabilities of the RAN from what it can do now to what is needed, it would be logical to outline tasks such as fisheries and patrolling of the EEZ which are not really the task of the RAN, being primarily a war-fighting body. As such, these tasks should be reassigned to a civilian or paramilitary organisation that would become, as Labour calls it, a fourth arm of the defence forces during times of war. A coastguard is required for law enforcement, which should not be the job of the RAN. Law enforcement and warfighting are fundamentally different tasks, as law enforcement demands the minimal use of force in apprehending offenders, while warfighting demands maximum force not merely for victory but for self-protection. The motto of 'hit them hard and hit them first' is not a bad doctrine for combat but a very bad one for law enforcement. By its nature, the Navy needs a substantial and complex support structure to manage the sophisticated vessels, weapons and electronics it needs. Its training requirements are vastly more complex than those needed for a police organisation. A coastguard, by contrast, needs a much less sophisticated logistic and training system.

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Australian Constabulary Operations | 5

Lieutenant Commander Nick Tate, Royal Australian Navy

Our Mission is to fight and win in the maritime environment as an element of a joint or combined force, to assist in maintaining Australia's sovereignty and to contribute to the security of our region.

RAN Mission Statement¹

The Australia Defence Association, in its 2002 submission to a Senate Committee, cited that the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) is over-stretched due to the excessive reliance by the Australian Government on its constabulary role. For example, 'Three frigates, instead of the usual patrol boats (PB), were committed to intercepting asylum seekers because of the policy of preventing landing at Christmas Island which is outside the range of the PB and which lacks port facilities that would permit their being ... stationed there.' They also indicated there is almost no ability to undertake other unpredicted operational requirements such as interception of distant fish poachers without compromising existing operations.²

The RAN has reported to Parliament³ that its level of current operations has detracted from its ability to train in some warfare disciplines. It further reported commitments to current operations had placed a high demand on all resources and that some capabilities needed to be placed in a lower state of readiness to allow for reconstitution.⁴ The operations reported included support to the war on terrorism, enforcement of United Nations sanctions against Iraq, peace monitoring on Bougainville, illegal immigration, fisheries and other constabulary functions. Operations in support of fisheries, illegal immigration and other constabulary functions can broadly be described as Maritime Law Enforcement

¹ Royal Australian Navy, *Our Mission: Navy 2001-2002*, Canberra, 2001, p. 1.

² Australia Defence Association, 2002, Submission on a Certain Maritime Incident to the Select Committee of the Australian Senate appointed to inquire into a certain maritime incident, p. 5. accessed 29 September 2003 at www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/maritime_incident_ctte/submissions/sub03.pdf

³ Department of Defence, *Defence Annual Report 2001-02*, Defence Publishing Service, Canberra, 2002, pp. 87-95.

⁴ Reconstitution is the process to restore capability and preparedness allowing for leave, maintenance, reconfiguration, training and work-up.

(MLE). Other functions broadly support the RAN's warfighting role. This author contends that, with the exception of the PB Force Element Group (FEG), most of the RAN's training and operations are in direct support of the warfighting role. MLE appears to be of lesser priority, except where specifically directed by Government, and suffers from being applied in an *ad hoc* manner.

The purpose of this essay is to review whether the RAN is adequately structured to undertake MLE tasks whilst ensuring its capability for warfighting role remains effective. This will be achieved by firstly describing the scope of the MLE task and identifying how it is currently achieved. Secondly, the RAN's involvement in MLE will be reviewed including its interrelationship with the warfighting role. Finally, this essay will discuss whether RAN structure or capabilities require any change.

Maritime Law Enforcement

To describe MLE and its achievement requires a review of the pertinent jurisdiction and legislation issues, identifying the range of Government authorities involved, how it is coordinated, and what the role encompasses.

The contention of most commentators is that Australia has no overriding jurisdiction covering MLE for maritime areas under its control.⁵ *Australia's Oceans Policy*⁶ attempts to explain the complex web of jurisdictional arrangements, including the States and the Northern Territory being responsible for internal waters and the first three nautical miles of territorial sea.⁷

Australia is a party to the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*, 1982⁸ (UNCLOS) and has claimed internal waters,⁹ a territorial sea, contiguous zone¹⁰ and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).¹¹ It is not the purpose of this essay

⁵ Woolner, D., 'Australian Coastal Surveillance: Changing Policy Pressures', *Maritime Studies*, 119, July/August 2001, pp. 1-9.

⁶ Environment Australia, *Australia's Oceans Policy*, Marine Group, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1998, pp. 41-42.

⁷ United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), Article 2: Territorial Sea. 'The sovereignty of a coastal State extends, beyond its land territory and internal waters and, in the case of an archipelagic State, its archipelagic waters, to an adjacent belt of sea, described as the territorial sea. UNCLOS, Article 3: Breadth of the territorial sea. Australia claims 12nm from a baseline set in accordance with Articles 5-16.

⁸ UNCLOS came into effect on 16 November 1994.

⁹ UNCLOS, Article 8: Internal Waters - 'waters on the landward side of the baseline of the territorial sea form part of the internal waters of the State.'

¹⁰ UNCLOS, Article 33: Contiguous Zone - contiguous to the territorial sea, claimed by Australia out to 24nm from baseline.

¹¹ UNCLOS, Article 55-75: Exclusive Economic Zone - Australia claims an EEZ from 12nm from baseline to 200nm from the baseline.

to define all of the issues with respect to each zone. However, simplistically, Australia is entitled to both legislate over, and enforce jurisdiction, for most domestic law to the territorial sea.¹² One major exception applies to ships conducting ‘innocent passage’¹³ through the territorial sea. Jurisdiction diminishes as vessels get further away from land. In the contiguous zone, Australia is only entitled to enforce its domestic law with respect either to preventing or punishing infringements of its customs, fiscal, immigration or sanitary laws and regulations.¹⁴ In its EEZ, Australia has the right to exploit living and non-living resources, and the concomitant obligation to protect and conserve the marine environment, jurisdiction is therefore limited to these aspects. Australia’s jurisdiction covers an area of 37,000 kilometres of coastline, with rights and responsibilities over 16 million square kilometres of offshore maritime area.¹⁵

In order to meet its international obligations¹⁶ Australia has passed various pieces of domestic legislation. A plethora of Australian Government departments is responsible for Federal level legislation and enforcement.¹⁷ The pertinent domestic legislation that impacts on RAN responsibilities when dealing with MLE includes: the *Customs Act 1901*, the *Migration Act 1958*, the *Fisheries Management Act 1991*, the *Crimes Act 1914*, the *Torres Strait Fisheries Management Act 1984*, the *Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1967*, and the *Environment Protection (Biodiversity Conservation) Act 1999*.¹⁸

¹² However, sovereignty over the territorial sea is not total. It is exercised subject to UNCLOS and to other rules of international law.

¹³ UNCLOS, Article 17: ‘ships of all States ... enjoy innocent passage through the territorial sea.’

¹⁴ UNCLOS, Article 33(1): ‘In ... the contiguous zone, the coastal State may exercise the control necessary to: (a) prevent infringement of its customs, fiscal, immigration or sanitary laws and regulations within its territory or territorial sea; (b) punish infringement of the above laws and regulations committed within its territory or territorial sea.’

¹⁵ Environment Australia, *Australia’s Oceans Policy*, Environment Australia, 1998, p. 7.

¹⁶ These obligations include UNCLOS, the *International Safety of Life at Sea Convention 1974* (SOLAS), and the *International Search and Rescue Convention 1979*.

¹⁷ The Australian Government departments include: the Australian Customs Service (border control), Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (migration), Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (quarantine), Australian Fisheries Management Authority (living marine resources), Australian Maritime Safety Authority (maritime safety and pollution), Department of Industry, Science, Tourism and Resources (non living marine resources) and the Australian Federal Police (crime).

¹⁸ Moore, C., ‘Legal Issues Surrounding an Australian Coastguard’, in *Journal of the Australian Naval Institute*, Winter 2002, pp. 6-11. This is not an exhaustive list but represents the bulk of the civil MLE responsibilities of the RAN.

The customs and migration legislation was adjusted in 1999 when the Prime Minister's Coastal Surveillance Task Force¹⁹ recommended 'comprehensive legislative amendments be introduced to further strengthen maritime investigatory and enforcement powers against both Australian and foreign flag vessels.'²⁰ The resulting *Border Protection Legislation Amendment Act 1999* gave the Australian Defence Force (ADF) a greater range of new powers without the requirement to obtain a warrant. The legislation attempted to enshrine in domestic law some principles from the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) such as hot pursuit, the contiguous zone, and powers over ships without nationality on the high seas.²¹

The MV *Tampa*²² incident of late August 2001 highlighted more operational and policy problems with the legislation²³ so the Government pushed additional legislation through Parliament. The resulting *Border Protection (Validation and Enforcement) Act 2001* and *Migration (Excision from Migration Zone) Act 2001* adjusted the *Migration* and *Customs* Acts and again increased the ADF powers substantially.²⁴ In particular, for ships or aircraft boarded for a suspected breach of either the *Customs Act* or the *Migration Act*, the legislation empowers

¹⁹ Hancock, N., *Border Protection Bill 2001*, Bills Digest No.41 2001-02, Department of the Parliamentary Library, p. 1. Because of two undetected landings of illegal entrants on the eastern coast of Australia in 1999, the Prime Minister established a Coastal Surveillance Task force. The task force was lead by Mr Max Moore-Wilton, Secretary of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, with the Chief of the Defence Force, and Secretaries of the Departments of Defence and Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, Chief Executive Officer Australian Customs, and Director General Office of National Assessments.

²⁰ Prime Minister's Coastal Surveillance Task Force, *Report of the Prime Minister's Coastal Surveillance Task Force*, June 1999, Recommendation 17.

²¹ Gately, W., & Moore, C., 'Protecting Australia's Maritime Borders: The Operational Aspects', in Tsamenyi, M., & Rahman, C. (editors), *Protecting Australia's Maritime Borders: The MV Tampa and Beyond*, Wollongong Papers on Maritime Policy No. 13, Centre for Maritime Policy, University of Wollongong, Wollongong, 2002, pp. 37-57.

²² On 26 August 2001, Coastwatch detected a wooden fishing boat in the vicinity of Christmas Island. The boat broke down and was subsequently assisted by the MV TAMPA. The TAMPA took onboard 438 unauthorised arrivals but was prevented from landing the passengers at Christmas Island by the Governments use of the ADF. Source: Hancock, N., *Border Protection Bill 2001*, Bills Digest No.41 2001-02, Department of the Parliamentary Library.

²³ The legislation was written with an intercept, arrest and detain focus, whereas the policy changed to an intercept, repel or return focus.

²⁴ Gately, W., & Moore, C., 'Protecting Australia's Maritime Borders: The Operational Aspects', pp. 37-57.

all ADF personnel as officers under the relevant act.²⁵ The authorisation is generally limited to the purposes of boarding, search, seizure, confirm identity and arrest without warrant,²⁶ and detention of Suspected Unlawful Non Citizens.²⁷

Whilst the RAN has no responsibility for developing or maintaining any of this legislation it has the bulk of the offshore enforcement capability. Coastwatch has coordinated border protection and other MLE operations since its formation in 1988 with the RAN supporting these operations since the late 1960s.²⁸ Coastwatch is a division of the Australian Customs Service and is headed by a RAN Rear Admiral who reports to the Chief Executive Officer of Customs. Coastwatch usually acts as a coordinator of MLE operations for Australian Government departments or agencies, known as clients. Coastwatch does not own any of its own surveillance or interdiction assets and is also not involved in policy or legislation development. Coastwatch utilises civilian aircraft contractors, RAN ships (mainly PB), Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) P3-C *Orion* surveillance aircraft and Customs National Marine Unit (CNMU) PB.²⁹ Intelligence support is provided by the clients as well as Defence. The Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit (JCPAA), in its review of Coastwatch, found that the Government's recent priority on illegal immigration had diminished Coastwatch's effectiveness in responding to fishing issues.³⁰ However, all the client agencies were still satisfied with the level of support they received from Coastwatch.

According to *Australia's Oceans Policy*, the ADF has an important role to 'protect Australia's national interests and sovereign rights.'³¹ There is a tension between wider Government policy and *Defence 2000*, the Defence White Paper. In *Australia's Oceans Policy*, the RAN has to 'maintain a visible presence on and over the sea' with an expectation to 'contribute fully to fisheries law enforcement activities' including within Australia's offshore territories. *Defence 2000* acknowledges the requirement to play an increasing and major

²⁵ *Border Protection (Validation and Enforcement) Act, Customs Act, and Migration Act.*

²⁶ *Migration Act* section 245F, *Customs Act* section 185.

²⁷ *Migration Act* section 189.

²⁸ The RAN provides a historical minimum of 1800 patrol boat days per year in support of this governmental approach to border protection. Source: Defence Annual Reports 1997-2001.

²⁹ Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia. Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, *Report 384: Review of Coastwatch*, Canberra, 2001, p. 2.

³⁰ Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia. Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, *Report 384: Review of Coastwatch*, pp. 101-104.

³¹ Environment Australia, *Australia's Oceans Policy - Specific Sectoral Measures*, Marine Group, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1998, p. 5.

part in these roles, however, will '... not allow these roles - important as they are - to detract from the ADF's core function of defending Australia from armed attack.'³² *Defence 2000* also highlights that the ADF is not the most cost-effective option at times and indicates that the Australian Government would prefer civilian responses to these issues.

RAN Involvement

Having described how the RAN is integral to Australia's current approach to MLE, it is worth exploring what that involvement actually consists of. The Chief of Navy (CN) recently identified MLE tasks as all being high profile and demanding requirements.³³ The RAN is heavily involved with the primary assets being the PB FEG with the requirements for PB surveillance and response capabilities expected to increase over the coming decade.³⁴

The main problem with the current approach is the use of more expensive, and sometimes inappropriate, platforms for the task. Whilst 80 per cent of PB effort is directed at MLE, other FEGs have increasingly become involved in border protection tasks in particular. This additional involvement has been necessary because of the Government's focus on people smuggling. Since November 2001, the successful intervention of Operation RELEX, the multi-departmental response to people smuggling, with one exception,³⁵ there have been no known unauthorised boat arrivals since 16 December 2001.

Operation RELEX's aim was 'to prevent, in the first instance, the incursion of unauthorised vessels into Australian waters such that, ultimately, people smugglers and asylum seekers would be deterred from attempting to use Australia as a destination.'³⁶ The lead Government agency for RELEX is the ADF in lieu of Coastwatch. It consists of the use of RAN major fleet units in addition to the usual Coastwatch regime. As a result of this increased tempo,

³² Commonwealth of Australia, *Defence 2000 - Our Future Defence Force*, Defence Publishing Service, Canberra, 2000, p. 13.

³³ Ritchie, C., 'The RAN today and tomorrow', presentation to the United Service Institution of the Australian Capital Territory Inc, 6 August 2003, at www.defence.gov.au/rusi/state/act%20lectures%20ritchie.htm. Tasks such as the ongoing border protection activities drug interdiction and fisheries patrols.

³⁴ Ritchie, C., 'The RAN today and tomorrow'.

³⁵ As at 15 October 2003. The one exception being a vessel that arrived at Port Hedland 1 July 2003 with 54 passengers, including 28 adult men, 17 adult women and 9 children believed to be from Vietnam. The vessel does not conform to the Operation RELEX profile.

³⁶ Select Committee on a Certain Maritime Incident report, Chapter 2, *Operation Relex*, at www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/maritime_incident_ctte, p. 13.

in financial year 2001-02 the RAN provided 2103 PB days, an additional 303 days over the usual rate of effort for MLE. The other FEG's provided additional ships for MLE tasks. HMAS *Tobruk* was used for 185 days of MLE, and the hydrographic force provided 451 days.³⁷ The major surface combatant FEG also provided an estimated 365 days although their contribution was not separately reported.³⁸

The discussion on the appropriateness of using the RAN for MLE centres on two aspects, cost effectiveness and the appropriateness of a military force undertaking what some believe to be an essentially civilian role. Cost effectiveness was a significant issue explored by the JCPAA. It found that RAN provided vessels were more expensive in terms of capital and running costs.³⁹ The Labour party identified that civil operations make significant savings in personnel costs through not having to pay military superannuation and service allowances or provide Defence Housing.⁴⁰ The main difference between RAN conditions of service and the Customs Workplace agreement is really the housing component, as CNMU personnel are paid higher allowances whilst at sea.⁴¹ CNMU personnel can reside almost anywhere in the country as long as they have access to a major airport so they can fly to join their PB as required. CNMU also has a multi-crewing concept ensuring greater sea days availability per platform, therefore reducing the capital cost per sea day.

If one accepts that the RAN cost of providing PB is greater than that of the CNMU, then the cost of using a frigate for border protection operations is even more uneconomical. One could argue that a frigate is not an efficient vehicle for MLE. The reason they are used is due to large distances and lack of port facilities that make the use of a PB difficult.

One could also argue that the CNMU is generally using the same pool of people targeted by the RAN for employment. However, a counter argument is that CNMU provides a civil employment opportunity for those interested in

³⁷ Department of Defence, *Defence Annual Report 2001-02*, Defence Publishing Service, Canberra, 2002, pp. 87-95.

³⁸ The estimate is based on one Surface Combatant being based at Christmas Island for the full year.

³⁹ Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia. Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, *Report 384: Review of Coastwatch*, p. 131.

⁴⁰ Thomas, T., 'Coast Guard v Coastwatch: Who's right?', in *Australian Defence Business Review*, Vol. 20 No. 15, 28 September 2001, pp. 10-13.

⁴¹ Australian Customs Service, *Certified Agreement 2002-2004*, Australian Customs Service, Canberra, 2002.

developing their seagoing career without having to resort to military service, with its potential for being sent to conflict. Thus, the Government has a greater range of people applying than would only for military service.

There have been many calls for the creation of a coastguard to take the roles the RAN currently undertakes. CN stated that MLE tasks 'are legitimate roles for navies.' He cautioned against any suggestions of attempting to save money by either structuring the RAN as more of a coastguard or establishing a separate coastguard.⁴² His statements are supported by *Australian Maritime Doctrine* which describes the modern span of operations to cover benign to coercive roles including military; constabulary; and diplomatic as shown in Figure 1.⁴³

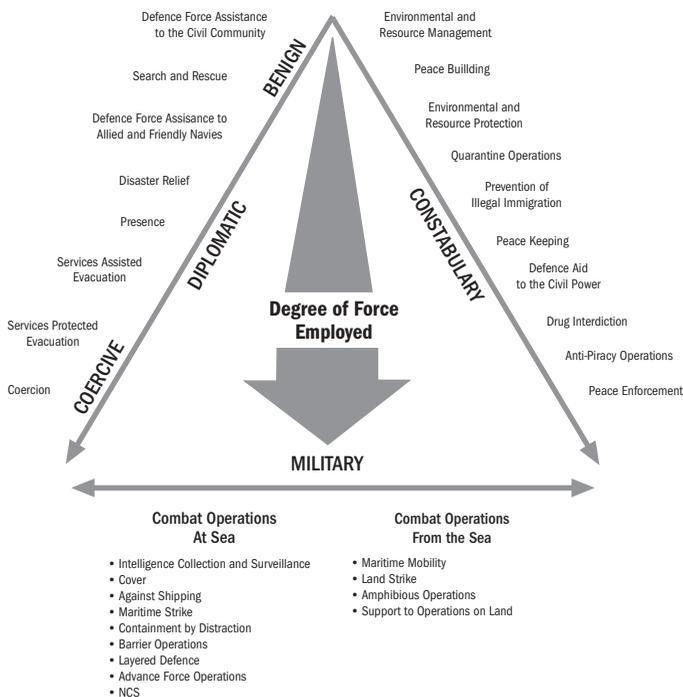


Figure 1: Australian Span of Maritime Operations⁴⁴

⁴² Ritchie, C., 'The RAN today and tomorrow'.

⁴³ Royal Australian Navy, *Australian Maritime Doctrine (RAN Doctrine 1)*, Defence Publishing Service, 2000, p. 57.

⁴⁴ Royal Australian Navy, *Australian Maritime Doctrine (RAN Doctrine 1)*, p. 57. This concept has been derived from the ideas advanced by Ken Booth in *Navies and Foreign Policy* and developed by Eric Grove in *The Future of Sea Power*.

The premise offered by CN is that 'naval forces structured and trained for the traditional military warfighting roles can easily undertake the less demanding diplomatic and constabulary ones, but the reverse is not true.'⁴⁵ This is used as the argument for the RAN to be primarily structured for war. In the author's opinion, this is often used, with the exception of the PB force, as an excuse for not procuring extra capabilities such as those required for Southern Ocean patrols. Dupont (2003) seems to have a similar view. He believes that the ADF needs to rethink its force structure to take into account 'a broader spectrum of threats including non-traditional challenges to security which have often been viewed by the military as something of a side-show, a distraction from their core business of preparing for and conducting 'high-end' war-fighting.'⁴⁶ Dupont believes Government needs to recognise that modern defence forces must win the peace as well as the war. He focuses, to some extent, on the RAN being involved in MLE, although he places more emphasis on criminal activities.⁴⁷

The focus of the civil surveillance program over recent history has been to the north of Australia and current PB have been suitable for the task. The focus of attention has now broadened with a number of fisheries operations being centred on the Southern Ocean. The ADF has reported that distant ocean operations in difficult seas will require vessels much larger than a PB.⁴⁸ Since the only RAN ships available to undertake these types of operations are the major surface combatants, they were initially used. However, this was uneconomical and so a commercial vessel, the *MV Southern Supporter*, was chartered to undertake the task.⁴⁹

On two occasions this vessel has been unable to make an arrest in EEZ due to a lack of appropriate equipment and training. Whilst the RAN has both the equipment and training to undertake this type of hazardous task, and despite agreeing that having capacity to operate in the Southern Ocean or elsewhere at the edge of Australia's EEZ 'is of national concern,' Defence has indicated

⁴⁵ Ritchie, C., 'The RAN today and tomorrow'.

⁴⁶ Dupont, A., *Transformation or Stagnation? Rethinking Australia's Defence*. Presentation to the United Service Institution of the Australian Capital Territory Inc, 25 February 2003, at www.defence.gov.au/rusi/state/act%20lectures%20dupont.htm.

⁴⁷ Such as narcotics smuggling and terrorism.

⁴⁸ Department of Defence, submission to the Joint Committee on Public Accounts and Audit, *Inquiry into Coastwatch*, vol. 2, p. S276, in Woolner, D., 'Australian Coastal Surveillance: Changing Policy Pressures', *Maritime Studies*, 119, July/August 2001, pp. 1-9.

⁴⁹ Woolner, D., 'Australian Coastal Surveillance: Changing Policy Pressures', *Maritime Studies*, 119, July/August 2001, p. 7.

that ‘there is no strategic justification for developing this capability.’⁵⁰ However, the JCPAA recommended that Defence should investigate the acquisition of a suitably armed patrol vessel for the Southern Ocean and other remote areas.⁵¹ The training overhead to ensure safe operation of a ship fitted weapon, and the particular difficulties of operating a boarding party in the Southern Ocean are significant. One could argue that the RAN is the only suitable organisation in Australia that could competently operate an armed vessel of this type.

Having identified the *ad hoc* and uncoordinated arrangements of MLE tasks, some review of possible solutions is required. Moore (2002) discussed the implications of the Labour Coastguard bill and proposed some alternative structures for enhancing MLE.⁵² These included enhancing Coastwatch, moving the PB FEG and CNMU to Coastwatch, or absorbing the role into Navy by creating a coastguard as a new arm. McLennan (2002) identified that a navy coastguard would be the answer, with specialised personnel, in the same vein as, and subsuming, the current hydrographic branch. He identified that it could be a component of Headquarters Australian Theatre or placed within Maritime Command.⁵³ The JCPAA concluded that the current Coastwatch model is in effect an ‘outsourced coastguard’⁵⁴ and that Coastwatch was the most efficient and effective model of the alternatives proposed.

CN appears to support this view, believing the RAN should concentrate most of its effort on the warfighting role. Whilst accepting that a coastguard may not be the most appropriate solution, this author finds it difficult to comprehend the basis of CN’s view. It appears to accept the ad-hoc arrangements currently in place for MLE or other Military Operations Other Than War. A point well made by Dupont is that ‘*ad hoc* responses lead to sub-optimal performance and operational over-stretch, endangering lives and jeopardising mission objectives.’⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Department of Defence, submission to the Joint Committee on Public Accounts and Audit, Inquiry into Coastwatch, vol. 2, p. S280, in Woolner, D., ‘Australian Coastal Surveillance: Changing Policy Pressures’, p. 7.

⁵¹ Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia. Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, *Report 384: Review of Coastwatch.*, p. xxi.

⁵² Moore, C., ‘Legal Issues Surrounding an Australian Coastguard’, in *Journal of the Australian Naval Institute*, Winter 2002, pp. 6-11.

⁵³ McLennan, B., ‘Maritime Border Protection and the Royal Australian Navy: Threat or Opportunity’, in *Protecting Australia’s Maritime Borders: The MVTAMPA and beyond*, Wollongong Papers on Maritime Policy, No 13, pp. 117-143.

⁵⁴ Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia. Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, *Report 384: Review of Coastwatch*, pp. 148-149.

⁵⁵ Dupont, A., *Transformation or Stagnation? Rethinking Australia’s Defence.*

Recent history has shown that the PB FEG will not be the only FEG involved in MLE and that a wide range of skills used in MLE are readily transferable to combat roles. This is supported by Hill (1988) who identifies how, as a medium power navy, the experience and forces required for each level of conflict build on each other. In normal conditions, navies should be focussed on deterrence and application of international law.⁵⁶ The deterrence function is only achieved where forces appear capable and ready to undertake higher levels of conflict if required. This is displayed by a good materiel state, training, and sufficient communications and intelligence. These are all displayed by undertaking MLE, which requires appropriate surveillance, and an inherent ability to inform, warn, board, inspect and if required, detain.⁵⁷ Whilst naval diplomacy provides some presence, undertaking MLE provides a much more solid opportunity for displaying competence and resolve for deterrence.

Hill describes the second level of conflict as 'Low Intensity Operations.'⁵⁸ These operations tend to be political and, more often, economic displays of a nation's power and are limited in scope by international 'principles of self-defence - necessity and proportionality.'⁵⁹ These principles provide a valuable skillset to navies, as they require the ability to obtain and process information or intelligence for both short and long term goals backed up by excellent communications and planning. Forces must also command 'a wide spectrum of violence, from finely discriminating to lethal.'⁶⁰ Government controls its forces for operations partly through Rules of Engagement and Orders for Opening Fire. Increased exposure to these controls increases understanding and ensures a greater ability to both prepare and conduct operations. Hill links these lower level conflicts to higher level operations and general war, with similar skill sets required by naval forces, only varying in levels of application.⁶¹

Modern warfare calls for proportionality, and navies cannot afford to be seen as blunt instruments of mass destruction. Therefore, MLE provides a useful skill set, but are also an important building block towards higher-level warfare

⁵⁶ Hill, J., 'Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers', *Journal of the Australian Naval Institute*, Volume 14, May 1988, No. 2, pp. 37-45.

⁵⁷ Hill, J., 'Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers', p. 39.

⁵⁸ Hill, J., 'Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers', p. 39. Hill defines low intensity operations as those that never merit the title of war, are limited in aim, scope and area, and are subject to the international law of self-defence.

⁵⁹ Hill, J., 'Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers', p. 39.

⁶⁰ Hill, J., 'Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers', p. 40.

⁶¹ Hill, J., 'Maritime Strategy for Medium Powers', p. 40.

skills. They assist the RAN's deterrence function in support of maintaining Australia's sovereignty and contributing to the security of the region. If one can accept this argument, then clearly the RAN should ensure it is heavily immersed in the role. The question is then to what extent should this occur and do they interfere with higher-level warfare skills. Clearly, Defence has reported that they do,⁶² however this is more because of RELEX and the requirement to conduct long range EEZ operations in such areas as the Southern Ocean.

Accepting that the RAN must continue to be heavily involved in MLE but that *ad hoc* arrangements are inefficient, then some capability or structural change is appropriate. Two main problems identified in this essay are the inappropriate use of other FEGs in MLE tasks, and the inefficient use of PB crews. The use of frigates for MLE, as a primary focus, has already been described as inefficient and uneconomical. In the author's opinion, the solution would have been met had the RAN invested in the Offshore Patrol Vessel which was to be capable of providing a greater level of activity than the PB. However, politics and economics will preclude that from occurring. Therefore, as indicated in the JCPAA report, the RAN should invest in at least one armed patrol vessel that is capable of operating in the Southern Ocean and the far reaches of Australia's EEZ. A possible solution for improving the availability of PB would be to widen the current multi-crewing regime from the Hydrographic FEG to encompass the PB FEG. This, combined with crew changes away from homeports, could also reduce inefficiencies.

Conclusion

Operations in support of fisheries, illegal immigration and other constabulary functions can broadly be described as MLE. Other functions broadly support the RAN's warfighting role. This author contends that, with the exception of the PB FEG, most of the RAN's training and operations are in direct support of the warfighting role.

The purpose of this essay was to review whether the RAN is adequately structured to undertake MLE tasks whilst ensuring its capability for warfighting role is remains effective.

The scope of the MLE task was explained using *Australia's Oceans Policy*, which provides an insight into Australian policy with respect to its management and conservation of Australia's oceans and marine life. Coastwatch coordinates MLE operations on behalf of its clients supported by the ADF and Customs.

⁶² Department of Defence, *Defence Annual Report 2001-02*, pp. 87-95.

This essay discussed whether MLE tasks could be sustained in conjunction with the warfighting role. The RAN is heavily involved with the primary assets used by the RAN being the PB FEG. Other FEG's provided additional ships for MLE tasks. However, RAN provided vessels are more expensive in terms of capital and running costs. Whilst MLE tasks are legitimate roles for navies and do contribute to essential warfighting skillsets the RAN must maintain the primacy of its warfighting focus.

The ADF has reported that distant ocean operations in difficult seas will require vessels much larger than a PB. Therefore, the recommendations for appropriate revisions to structure and capability of the RAN are to reduce the use of major fleet units in these tasks and that a larger armed patrol vessel be procured to undertake EEZ patrol tasks. Also, that the RAN incorporates multi crewing for this role, thus freeing up the major fleet units for their warfighting role.

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Enforcing Australian Sovereignty and Sovereign Rights | 6

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The world's oceans are rapidly becoming a barren wasteland, devoid of their natural marine biodiversity, due to a number of factors, including a lack of knowledge of the marine environment by nations the world over, growing demands upon commercial fishing fleets to increase profits at any cost, and growing populations in many developing nations dependent upon fish for their staple diet. Surprisingly, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982 (UNCLOS, or otherwise known as the Law of the Sea Convention - LOSC) provides little help to coastal States who are responsible to provide for the protection of the living resources within their Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ).¹ Over the next 20-30 years, with growing populations and increasing technology to catch fish, the situation is likely to become worse, unless some significant power can be given back to coastal States for effective protection of their sovereign rights and enforcement through an improved LOSC. Furthermore, new technologies will become available which may make policing of the EEZ more practical, as long as the LOSC is willing to move with changing times and remain focussed on its core principles which include 'the equitable and efficient utilisation of the oceans resources, the conservation of their living resources, and the study, protection and preservation of the marine environment.'²

There have been examples in Australia's recent history where the LOSC has failed Australia in its resolve to protect its sovereign rights, which has had the resultant effect of reducing the deterrence value of active policing deployments to the Southern Ocean within the Heard and McDonald Islands (HIMI) EEZs. This also brings to light the Australian Defence Force (ADF) involvement in enforcing Government policy and its ability to do so effectively across the broad expanse of Australia's jurisdiction. This issue of enforcing the LOSC in order to conserve the living resources of the marine environment within Australia's EEZ is paramount.

¹ United Nations, *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982 (UNCLOS)*, United Nations, New York, 1982, Articles 56, 61, 63 & 193.

² UNCLOS, p. 21.

Australian Maritime Interests and Issues Into the Next 30 Years

Firstly, there is a difference between 'sovereignty' and 'sovereign rights'. The LOSC states that the 'sovereignty' of a State extends from its shores to the limit of its Territorial sea, thus the State has the same rights over this section of sea as it does over its land.³ 'Sovereign rights', however, is exercised within the EEZ and provides the coastal State with rights for exploring and exploiting, conserving and managing the natural resources.⁴

One of the primary reasons the world's oceans are becoming over-fished is that there is a general lack of knowledge of the marine ecosystem. This is not surprising given the sheer expanse of ocean to be managed by coastal States. Australia has declared a 200 nautical mile EEZ around its mainland and offshore Territories. This equates to some 11 million square kilometres of EEZ, compared to the Australian landmass of 7.8 million square kilometres.⁵ With the introduction of *Australia's Oceans Policy* in 1998, Australia has been considered amongst the world leaders in marine science and research, however, there is still much of the oceans which are not yet known or understood.⁶ Glenn Hurry, General Manager of Fisheries and Aquaculture Australia, states that '11 of our important fisheries are currently regarded as over fished or fished to capacity' and that there is 'no potential capacity to expand our domestic fisheries'⁷ without first reducing the current demand to allow for stocks to rebuild. This is a fairly grim picture for a nation with a notable reputation for oceans policy. The question then is 'what is the state of the world's fisheries?'

Overfishing in the northern hemisphere is a widespread problem, with some fisheries being completely destroyed – the Canadian Grand Banks and the seas around China are prime examples.⁸ This has driven northern commercial fishing fleets to fish further afield upon the high seas, or by arrangement with other nations within their EEZs. Of note for Australia is the increasing number of illegal Patagonian Toothfish boats which have begun to regularly

³ United Nations, *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982 (UNCLOS)*, Article 2.

⁴ UNCLOS, Article 56.

⁵ Prime Minister's Science and Engineering Council, *Australia's Ocean Age: Science and Technology for Managing our Ocean Territory*, viewed 26 Aug 03, <www.nla.gov.au/misc/ocs/ocean1.html>

⁶ Michaelis, F.B., *International Year of the Oceans-1998, Australia's policies, Programs and Legislation*, Department of the Parliamentary Library, viewed 26 Aug 03, <www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/rp/1998-99/99rp06.htm>

⁷ Hurry, G., *Tomorrow's Fish*, Agriculture Fisheries and Forests Australia, viewed 2 Sep 03, <www.asic.org.au/seafooddirections/2001/pdf/27.pdf>

⁸ FAO Fisheries Department, *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2002*, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, Rome, 2002, pp. 3-45.

fish the Southern Oceans, including within the HIMI EEZ. Based on the current level of illegal fishing in the Southern Ocean, the Patagonian Toothfish is expected to disappear within 10 years⁹ unless immediate action is implemented to curb these activities.

Considerable problems are also developing within Asia, stemming from a population which has more than doubled in the past 40 years to 3.7 billion in 2000¹⁰ and which is heavily reliant upon fish for its daily dietary requirements. This is coupled with destructive fishing practices, which stem from poorly educated subsistence fishermen utilising cyanide and dynamite fishing for example, which destroys the marine biodiversity and any chance for a sustainable fishing industry. This may have enormous consequences for the region, possibly requiring entire populations to either move to alternate locations where resources are not yet depleted, or transition to new industries. The latter may not be possible in many developing nations, therefore an increase in crime, piracy, illegal immigration and illegal fishing may be the result. The resultant effect upon Australia could be an unstable neighbourhood providing many challenges for the maintenance of Australia's sovereign rights within its EEZ, along with other potential threats such as terrorism and illegal immigration.

Thinking laterally for a moment, there is an array of other developments which may arise within the next 20-30 years. Northern fishing fleets may increase their capability to fish further south within Australia's EEZ. As world fish prices rise proportionally due to supply and demand, Australian fishermen may be enticed into fishing for foreign owned companies, passing their catch to foreign mother-ships illegally at sea. Australian fishing vessels may also become the target of fish piracy. Asian fishing communities, becoming completely fished out and looking to resettle elsewhere, may see HIMI as a viable area for resettlement.

The issue for the ADF is its ability, or inability, to patrol this vast EEZ, including the Southern Ocean, and Australia's obligations to actively patrol and enforce its sovereign rights within its EEZ. The consequences for Australia not enforcing its sovereignty or sovereign rights could be severe. This could lead

⁹ Cot, Judge, in handing down a separate opinion in the 'Volga' case on 23 Dec 02, referred to evidence presented by Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources 1980 (CCAMLR) that the estimate for the 1997/98 season was that illegal Patagonian Tooth-fishing was at more than twice the sustainable level and if continued the species would be wiped out within about 10 years.

¹⁰ United Nations Economic and Social Commission (ESCAP), *Dirty Water Dwindling Resources Threaten Asia-Pacific*, viewed 18 Aug 03, <www.gci.ch/digital_forum/digiforum/articles/article2002/dirtywater.html>

to a depleted or overfished EEZ, rampant illegal immigration, piracy and fish smuggling, or even a loss of the validity of claims over the Australian Antarctic Territory (AAT) EEZ and HIMI EEZ. 'If Australia wishes to protect and strengthen its sovereignty claims in Antarctica it must assume the responsibilities as well as the rights of a sovereign.'¹¹ Further, 'In order to demonstrate a nation's resolve and capability to exercise control over its sovereign territory there must be a real expectation that the breaking of rules within that nation's maritime domain will be discovered and punished.'¹²

LOSC Dilemmas

There are a number of references to a coastal State's obligations to preserve the marine environment. The coastal State has 'sovereign rights for exploring and exploiting, conserving and managing the natural resources'.¹³ A Total Allowable Catch (TAC) is to be determined in order to ensure proper conservation and maintenance of the living resources and that they not be endangered by over exploitation.¹⁴ States must agree upon measures for the conservation of stocks occurring within adjoining EEZs or adjacent high seas through regional or sub regional organisations.¹⁵ States may enforce coastal State laws and regulations to enforce their sovereign rights within their EEZ.¹⁶ States must take measures to ensure their nationals conserve the living resources of the high seas¹⁷ and determine a TAC and establish other conservation means for the living resources of the high seas.¹⁸ 'States have the obligation to protect and preserve the marine environment'¹⁹ and finally they have the sovereign right to exploit their natural resources pursuant to environmental policies and a duty to protect and preserve the marine environment.²⁰

¹¹ Scott, S., 'Maritime Surveillance off the Australian Antarctic Territory: The Political Context', in MacKinnon, D. & Sherwood, D. (editors), *Policing Australia's Offshore Zones Problems and Prospects*, Centre for Maritime Policy, University of Wollongong, 1997, p. 145.

¹² Scott, S., 'Maritime Surveillance off the Australian Antarctic Territory: The Political Context', p. 145.

¹³ UNCLOS Article 56.

¹⁴ UNCLOS Article 61.

¹⁵ UNCLOS Article 63.

¹⁶ UNCLOS Article 73.

¹⁷ UNCLOS Article 117.

¹⁸ UNCLOS Article 119.

¹⁹ UNCLOS Article 192.

²⁰ UNCLOS Article 193.

On the surface this appears to provide clear, unambiguous and strong guidelines for the preservation of the marine environment and its living resources. However, there is an argument which states that the law enforcement aspect is 'vague and uncoordinated', requiring an extensive knowledge of several different areas of the LOSC to simply effect a boarding of a vessel for fisheries inspection.²¹

There is also some doubt in legal circles as to whether the LOSC is 'hard law' or merely 'soft law'. Mr Bill Edeson states 'it is not always easy to determine whether the use of "shall" in the Convention connotes a strict legal obligation or whether, in some circumstance, it connotes little more than a "best endeavours" clause.'²² Consequently this results in coastal States having great difficulty in effectively deterring Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing. Examples of this 'soft law' are apparent in the recent MV *Volga* case in Australia. In handing down the judgement on the prompt release of the vessel *Volga* and its crew members, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) merely stated it understood the concerns about IUU.²³ However, the bond set by Australia was not upheld and the owner of the *Volga* was required to pay a comparatively small figure compared to the profits of such illegal fishing. Judge Shearer noted in his dissenting opinion on the case, that the Commission had set a TAC at its most recent meeting of the 4 Nov 2002, noting that illegal fishing had depleted stocks of Patagonian Toothfish to a point where there were potentially catastrophic effects of the continuation of such fishing. His conclusion was that illegal fishing must be punished with a high monetary penalty in order to provide a satisfactory level of deterrence.²⁴

The LOSC does not effectively provide for any degree of personal accountability or deterrence for illegal actions by a fishing vessel's master or key crew members. 'Coastal State penalties for violations of fisheries laws and regulations in the EEZ may not include imprisonment ... or any other form of

²¹ Tsamenyi, M. & Mfodwo, K., 'Enforcing Fisheries Jurisdiction in the EEZ: Some Legal and Policy Considerations', in MacKinnon, D. & Sherwood, D. (editors), *Policing Australia's Offshore Zones Problems and Prospects*, Centre for Maritime Policy, University of Wollongong, 1997, p. 260.

²² Calder, M. 'Implications for the Legal Profession in Australia', in Tsamenyi, Bateman & Delaney, (editors), *The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea: What it Means to Australia and Australia's Marine Industries*, Centre of Marine Policy, University of Wollongong, 1996, p. 130.

²³ 'The Tribunal understands the international concerns about illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing and appreciates the objectives behind the measures taken by States, including the States Parties to CCMLAR, to deal with the problem.' Nelson, L.D.M, *ITLOS on the Report of the Tribunal at the Thirteenth Meeting of the States Parties to the LOSC*, 9 Jun 03, <www.itlos.org>

²⁴ Shearer, Judge, *Judgement delivered in the 'Volga' Case - Russian Federation v. Australia*, ITLOS, 23 Dec 02.

corporal punishment.²⁵ Additionally, crews must be promptly released upon posting of a reasonable bond.²⁶ If a coastal State is to have any chance of effectively enforcing its obligations for the protection of its sovereign rights within its EEZ and to protect the marine environment and living resources, then this area of the LOSC requires urgent change to allow for personal accountability. This view is also held by Judge Shearer.²⁷

Finally, an examination of the provisions for 'hot pursuit'. Hot pursuit is not deemed to have begun unless the pursuing ship can ensure the ship pursued is within the limits of its territorial sea, contiguous zone or EEZ and that the ship pursued is provided a 'visual or auditory signal to stop at a distance which enables it to be seen or heard by the foreign ship.'²⁸ The term 'auditory signal' has caused conflict, in that it does not specifically refer to the international distress frequency, VHF Channel 16. Australia has used 'auditory signals' through VHF Channel 16 as a matter of course to initiate hot pursuit. Although a case has not yet been discarded due to hot pursuit being initiated through this means, it does not mean this will not continue to be challenged in future court cases unless addressed within the LOSC. Other means not currently mentioned in the LOSC include the use of satellite phones or fax to initiate hot pursuit.

Potential Solutions to LOSC Dilemmas

The LOSC, or UNCLOS III, is due for review in 2004. This provides an opportunity for States to propose a range of changes to bring the LOSC up to date with current world opinion, values and ideals. This may also be an ideal opportunity to propose the conduct of UNCLOS IV, possibly in 2005/6. The primary changes required are a strengthening of the LOSC in order to eliminate confusion as to its status as 'hard' law, a review of relevant articles pertaining to IUU to allow coastal States greater ease to enforce their sovereign rights and a recognition that developing technologies need to be considered along with their impact on the relevant articles of the LOSC.

A strengthening of the LOSC is required to provide increased enforcement powers of coastal States over areas of their jurisdiction. The LOSC provides the main internationally recognised tool to enforce coastal State environmental

²⁵ UNCLOS Article 73(3).

²⁶ UNCLOS Articles 73(2) & 292.

²⁷ Shearer, Judge, *Judgement delivered in the 'Volga' Case*.

²⁸ LOSC, Article 111.

and sovereignty issues.²⁹ IUU needs to be recognised for what it is – an attack on another State’s sovereign rights, or in the case of IUU in a State’s Territorial Seas, its sovereignty. If the LOSC were strengthened to recognise IUU as an attack on another States sovereign rights or sovereignty, other legal mechanisms could be enacted by coastal States to more effectively protect and enforce their ‘inheritance’. The key here is the resolve of the ITLOS judges, who must send a clear message to the international community that IUU is unacceptable and will carry the most severe penalties.

Article 300 discusses the requirements for State Parties to act in good faith and in a manner which does not constitute an abuse of rights within the LOSC, whilst Article 304 discusses responsibility and liability for damage. If the ITLOS were to start fining fisherman and vessel owners with substantial damages bills, along with other penalties associated with IUU, a substantial deterrent mechanism would be created. Proceeds from such fines could be used in international efforts to further research the world’s oceans to ensure their long-term prosperity, or to help developing States implement responsible oceans policy.

As previously mentioned, Articles 73(3), 73(2) and 292 provide for the prompt release of vessels and their crews and further restrict coastal States from imprisoning or handing down corporal punishment to offenders. This largely removes personal accountability from fishing vessel Masters and crews, thus providing them a degree of immunity. The LOSC needs amendment to allow coastal States the right to at least imprison offenders in order to provide a greatly increased level of personal deterrence against illegal activities. The emphasis must become the protection of the marine environment and its resources, not the illegal activities of companies and individuals.

Finally, the issue of the vast number of subsistence fishing communities as previously discussed needs addressing. At present there are no provisions for the mandatory transfer of technology from the developed to the developing coastal States.³⁰ It is in the best interest of all parties involved for these local communities to have the capacity to embrace the principles of sustainable development, integrated environmental management, use of best available technologies, and environmental best practice³¹ for the future of their livelihoods.

²⁹ The other tool being international customary law, which is largely being determined by the practice and implementation of the LOSC.

³⁰ Tsamenyi, M., *Offshore Resource Development*, p. 146.

³¹ Rose, G., ‘Protection and Conservation of the Marine Environment’, in Tsamenyi, Bateman & Delaney (editors), *The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea: What it Means to Australia and Australia’s Marine Industries*, Centre of Marine Policy, University of Wollongong, 1996, p. 153.

Potential Problems with Proposed Changes

In making these changes to the LOSC, what could be the possible ramifications? The obvious drawback with viewing IUU as an attack on a State's sovereignty or sovereign rights is the potential for armed conflict. Such a change would have to be written so as to avoid the involvement of armed forces endangering life at sea, with the aim to provide States with increased latitude to implement severe penalties for such illegal activities. This is supported by the school of thought that states 'the drafters of the LOSC did not intend to subject the use of force for economic resource protection'.³²

The tightening of the LOSC articles to become 'hard law' with strong penalties may not be possible, noting that UNCLOS III has not been ratified by every nation and a radical change of intent in developing a potential UNCLOS IV may not receive widespread support. Finally, developing nations invariably do not have the means to practically implement the many requirements for responsible oceans management as discussed, despite the availability of the technology.

On balance, the LOSC is a useful tool for global conservation and management of the marine environment and resources. It has room for improvement and there are many examples of certain individuals, companies and States blatantly ignoring the requirements of the LOSC. However, it is better than nothing and at least provides a framework, if not 'hard law', for the responsible use of the maritime environment.

Impact on ADF Force Structure

The extent to which LOSC developments over the next 20-30 years may impact upon the ADF will depend largely on how the LOSC develops over this time to embrace the use of new technologies.

Within this time frame it is likely that Australia could have military satellites or Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)³³ monitoring its EEZ, with sufficient capability to give real time visual footage of IUU fishermen within its EEZ conducting illegal activities, localised to within a few metres through Global Positioning Systems (GPS). With such monitoring a fishing vessel could be called on its satellite phone and told to report to the nearest Australian port for arrest, or a response vessel despatched from port to make an arrest, with

³² Tsamenyi, M. & Mfodwo, K., 'Enforcing Fisheries Jurisdiction in the EEZ: Some Legal and Policy Considerations', in MacKinnon, D. & Sherwood, D. (editors), *Policing Australia's Offshore Zones Problems and Prospects*, Centre for Maritime Policy, University of Wollongong, 1997, p. 262.

³³ AEW&C and Global Hawk capabilities will have been long established in this time frame.

hot pursuit having been initiated and maintained through these new technologies until the arrival of the response vessel. The LOSC certainly does not provide for this situation now, but should be mindful of the enormity of the challenges facing coastal States to enforce their sovereign rights and duty to preserve the maritime environment and its resources. The Australian Army is already experimenting with its first UAV in the Solomon Islands and defence forces world wide have been using them for years. Such satellite or UAV technologies would provide the ADF with a first rate surveillance tool for its obligations in the Defence White Paper (D2000) for the defence of Australia and its direct approaches,³⁴ along with its stated customer objective to the Australian Government to assist to maintain Australia's sovereignty.³⁵ The primary operational peacetime roles for such technologies would easily translate to the enforcement of Australian sovereignty and sovereign rights within the extensive EEZ, thus providing the Australian Government a dual role and effect for its Defence dollar. This is supported by Navy's Plan Green, which states 'the Navy must have capabilities that can be applied in the myriad of operational circumstances that the ADF may have to confront in 2020, from peace to war.'³⁶

Closely related to this concept is that of building an 'effects based'³⁷ defence force. With the recent announcement of the source selection for the *Armidale* Class patrol boat (ACPB), due to replace the *Fremantle* Class patrol boat (FCPB) from 2004, it appears there has not been a whole of Government approach during the requirements phase of this patrol vessel. Whilst undoubtedly a most capable patrol boat, meeting and exceeding the current capability of the FCPB, the ACPB will not be large enough to have sufficient sea keeping qualities to conduct enforcement operations in Australia's southern EEZ areas, including the Australian Antarctic Territory (AAT) EEZ. Such a capability comes at a price, with the 'failed' Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) project being cancelled in the mid-1990's after Malaysia pulled out of negotiations for a joint project. This vessel would have been of sufficient size and capability to fulfil these southern patrolling duties. Importantly, the OPV was designed to carry a helicopter, essential for the conduct of boarding operations in extremely rough weather conditions. This requirement was evidenced recently, with the inability of the civil charter vessel MV *Southern Supporter* to conduct a

³⁴ Commonwealth of Australia, *Defence 2000 Our Future Defence Force (D2000)*, Defence Publishing Service, Canberra, 2000, p. 30.

³⁵ Chief of Navy, *Navy Plan Green 2003-2013*, Director of Navy Preparedness and Plans, Canberra, 2003, pp. 2-4.

³⁶ Chief of Navy, *Navy Plan Green 2003-2013*, pp. 13-15.

³⁷ Chief of Navy, *Navy Plan Green 2003-2013*, pp. 13-16.

boarding of the fishing vessel MV *Viarsa*, thus commencing an extended hot pursuit through the Southern Ocean.³⁸ The Australian Government must ask itself, 'what price for Australian sovereignty?' It is obvious the current arrangements of Australian Customs operating through civil charter vessels is not up to the task of boarding non cooperative fishing vessels in the Southern Ocean. It is also a role the ACPB will not be able to fill. If left to the RAN, it is a costly exercise, with the cost of running a frigate estimated at \$5 million per week,³⁹ with an average deployment to the HIMI EEZ taking three weeks. It would surely have been more cost effective in the long term to have proceeded with an OPV style vessel rather than the ACPB in building an 'effects based' defence force.

Conclusion

The world's fisheries are not going to remain productive if they continue to be managed as they have in the past. There is a growing weight of evidence to support this assertion and it is becoming apparent in many areas of the world where fishing communities are having to travel further to find fish. As Australia begins to come to terms with its responsibilities under the LOSC to conserve the marine environment, it will become an increasingly obvious target for those States that have not managed their resources effectively. The resultant impact is widespread and over the next 20-30 years has the potential to include rising crime, increased piracy, increased illegal immigration and increased IUU.

The LOSC provides apparently clear regulations with respect to the conservation and management of the marine resources, but is often seen as 'soft law'. There is an opportunity in the near future for Australia to propose some amendments to the LOSC for it to become a tool more closely resembling 'hard law', thus giving coastal States increased capacity to enforce their sovereignty and sovereign rights. All of these factors will test the Australian Government's resolve to enforce its sovereign rights and sovereignty, which will have a great impact on the ability of the ADF to keep pace with vacillating Government policy and achieving an appropriate outcome in building an 'effects based' force structure.

³⁸ Darby, A., 'Chase Around the World for White Gold', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 23-24 Aug 03, p. 13.

³⁹ Figures provided by the RAN to the ITLOS and presented by Cot, Judge, *Judgement delivered in the 'Volga'*.

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Manoeuvre Operations in the Littoral Environment

7

2003 Winner Open Section

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In any consideration of manoeuvrist theories it is necessary first to define what manoeuvre, in a military sense, is. Having done so it is then possible to judge its applicability, or otherwise, to Australia's geostrategic and military strategic circumstances. It is fortuitous that history provides an excellent template against which many of these themes can be measured, in the form of operations in the South West Pacific from 1942 to 1945. This conflict was modern, in the sense that it took place in the air power era, but the lessons from it must be revisited in the light of subsequent and likely future developments. The practical application of any conclusions must be considered holistically, not in single-Service stovepipes, as modern warfare is intrinsically Joint.

The concept of manoeuvre in warfare is, in its simplest form, to employ movement to apply one's own strength against enemy weakness while avoiding the reverse. It is not a new concept. The great Chinese military philosopher, Sun Tzu, described the 'indirect approach'. He saw the need for the 'ordinary force' to make a direct approach to pin the enemy, while the 'extraordinary force' took the indirect approach and struck his key vulnerabilities. Sun Tzu, like many subsequent military philosophers, considered manoeuvre in the context of the land environment. Operational Manoeuvre From The Sea (OMFTS) considers the problem from the joint perspective, using the sea as manoeuvre space to avoid the complications and obstructions which constrain manoeuvre on land. This idea is not a new one either. The Athenians, the Vikings and the British all practised it with varying degrees of success.

Australia has an absolute dependence on free maritime passage and a deep level of integration with the regional economy. This dictates a maritime strategy including a need to be able to take action far from home and that is what *Defence 2000* purports to be. Unfortunately it then goes on to describe a sea denial strategy which is a quite different thing. The missing ingredient is sea control, and this comprises sea assertion and power projection.¹

¹ Turner, S. (Admiral, United States Navy), *Designing a Modern Navy*.

Regional geostrategic and military factors make manoeuvrist concepts relevant to Australia. The Australian Regular Army is small, at just six readily available battalions. By comparison Malaysia claims 35 regular battalions and Indonesia 92. These crude figures do not allow for differences in readiness or quality, but the fact remains that neither the Australian Army nor the population base can support sustained land combat on the same scale as other regional powers. Australia must therefore employ manoeuvre to offset this.

Australia's environment is maritime and archipelagic. This is the only environment other than desert or Russian steppes in which the purest forms of manoeuvre theory can be applied. The practise of bypassing and isolating enemy strong points is much easier when one side can dominate the manoeuvre medium (ie. the sea) while denying it to an enemy. In this case a land-based enemy is pinned not by Sun Tzu's 'ordinary force' but by water. Equally, striking key vulnerabilities from the sea is infinitely more practicable when nearly all the key military and economic infrastructure is within 20 miles of the coast. If any region of the world is ideal for OMFTS it is the South West Pacific. Self-evidently, this depends on sea control.

The salient lesson of Second World War in the South West Pacific is that the advent of the 'third dimension', air power, fundamentally changed the nature of sea control. Engagements between opposing surface ships had far less impact in this theatre compared to those determined between aircraft and ships. At the Coral Sea, Midway and a string of other battles surface warships proved unable to defend themselves against air attack. They needed air power of their own. A nation that cannot project sustained air power into a non-permissive environment cannot lay claim to a maritime strategy, only a sea denial strategy.

During the Second World War Nimitz and McArthur demonstrated a better understanding of the inter-relationship between sea, air and land power than the majority of modern strategists. McArthur did not expect to be able to rely on the Navy's carriers, as their priority was in the Central Pacific, so he was reliant on land-based air power. He therefore determined that the airfields were the tactical centres of gravity and operational decisive points. He could control the sea only if he could control the airfields. He could control the airfields only if he could take and hold the land on which they stood. He could do this only if he could control the sea. This triangle was the key to the Allied campaign and to the Japanese blitzkrieg that preceded it. They were on a much larger scale than could be expected today but the method is scalable and remains the key to control of the South West Pacific region in the 21st Century. An example illustrates this point.

The strongest Japanese land force in the region, about 100,000 battle-hardened veterans was well dug in on Rabaul. The Allies defeated it without even landing there. The Japanese could not be strong everywhere and the Allies took a number of nearby areas from the sea, often against little or no opposition, and established air bases. The allied aircraft then mounted an intense offensive counter-air campaign to gain localised temporary air superiority, allowing further amphibious landings in the Admiralties, completely isolating Rabaul. After that the Rabaul-based Japanese quickly ran out of fuel and became as irrelevant as if they had been overrun, but at a fraction of the cost.

Although manoeuvrist at the operational level, operations ashore were, of necessity, usually attritional and linear. The normal sequence was to establish a beachhead, build up combat power and then break out. This provides a degree of logistic insurance but slows tempo, sometimes negating the initial surprise of landing at an unexpected time and place, as occurred at Gallipoli, Anzio and Salerno. The OMFTS solution is Ship to Objective Manoeuvre (STOM). By eliminating the operational pause at the beachhead it was hypothesised that sufficient tempo could be generated to capitalise on surprise and maintain the lead in the Observe-Orient-Decide-Act (OODA) loop. It is important to understand that STOM does not eliminate the problem of crossing beach; it only eliminates the pause to build up a reserve of combat supplies behind it.

Remarkably, Australia has no joint concept for operations in an archipelagic region. In its absence Army took the lead in the late 1990s with Manoeuvre Operations in the Littoral Environment (MOLE), and its offshoot, Entry by Air and Sea (EAS). MOLE is a Whole-of Campaign concept, from initiation to the restoration of stability. The original intention of these two concepts was to provide a vehicle for Army experimentation to find how Army could best contribute to maritime strategy. The release of MOLE and EAS did more to promote progress in amphibious capability development in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) than any other event, including real world operations. From a single-service point of view it is well argued, manoeuvrist and forward looking. Viewed from a joint maritime perspective, however, it has the flavour of an expeditionary continentalist strategy.

MOLE starts with the problem of defeating the enemy ashore and works backward, paralleling the well-proven amphibious reverse-planning process. On this basis the HEADLINE Experiment found that Army required a Brigade of 3,000 to achieve EAS, although the amphibious element is less than one quarter of the total. Follow-on forces bring the total Army commitment to nearly 9,000 personnel. This is highly ambitious² and it could be argued that this is no longer a land contribution to a Joint Maritime Strategy, but vice versa.

² This is beyond the capability of any European nation except, arguably, the UK.

Even if MOLE was affordable³ it is highly questionable if throwing the entire deployable strength of the Army into a single land operation is the best way to conduct archipelagic manoeuvre warfare. The Amphibious Manoeuvre Warfare paper⁴ approaches the issue from a maritime perspective and a broad estimate of affordability. Its underlying rationale is that Australia's relative strength in technology and weakness in manpower militates against sustained warfighting embroilments ashore. It sees the projection of force ashore in the context of sea control rather than delivering forces for a sustained land campaign. It relies on isolation, bypassing by sea, striking key vulnerabilities ashore and re-embarking as soon as expedient.

It acknowledges that Operations Other Than War (OOTW), such as Operation TANAGER (East Timor) may require larger land forces but these do not necessarily have to be delivered immediately and tactically. This is a maritime counterpart to the continentalist MOLE.

The reverse planning process is a sound method of planning an amphibious operation using a given set of resources. It is not, however, a good way to develop a force structure. This sequential approach inevitably leads to trying to generate maximum combat weight ashore but this is seldom the most effective approach as it reduces cross-environment agility. The greatest advantage of an amphibious force is its ability to exploit information superiority then manoeuvre at sea to land where the enemy is weak. It achieves its mission by capitalising on surprise and keeping inside the enemy's OODA loop. While it is at sea it is an operational level threat due to its mobility and unpredictability. Once ashore it is no more than a minor tactical force. The constraints of affordable amphibious shipping mean that it will rarely overmatch a shore-based opponent in a simple trial of strength.

A balance is required between agility and combat weight and the mechanism for deriving such a force is joint iterative development. Clear higher-level direction on potential areas of operation and a free hand to develop innovative courses of action are essential. The development of a joint theatre-level concept of operations, tested by experimentation, is the most critical link in this process. Even at the tactical level the concept of operations must be derived jointly before single-service experimentation can be meaningful. Such a process would almost certainly result in a very different set of Military Response Options to the current, somewhat linear, set.

³ 'The ability to conduct MOLE operations as presently conceived is likely to increase lift requirements dramatically, and require the acquisition costs to increase well beyond AUD 4-5 billion.' *Strategic Lift Study - Recommendations* Page XVIII.

⁴ Produced by AASG for DNSF in 2002 as a contribution to FMOC 2020.

If these manoeuvrist concepts are to be employed properly the consequences for Army and Air Force are every bit as revolutionary and unsettling as those for Navy. Sea assertion is impossible without guaranteed air power on demand.⁵ A few minutes with a calculator will show that, even with air-to-air refuelling and the relatively long-range Joint Strike Fighter, mainland-based fighter cover cannot be sustained at ranges relevant to a maritime strategy. Enabling air power over the battlespace would become the focus for joint maritime manoeuvre operations in much the same way as it was for Nimitz and MacArthur.

This presents three big questions: Firstly, how is this force to be commanded; secondly, how can fighter support be provided; and thirdly, how does this change the role of the surface fleet?

Australia in the 21st Century commands small combat forces yet maintains a command structure not dissimilar to that of major powers. There is considerable replication between the strategic, operational and tactical levels, and between environmental component headquarters. This is not compatible with the rapid, concurrent decision-making necessary to exploit modern knowledge-based, high-tempo manoeuvre operations. The separation frustrates close coordination and generates triplication (or worse) of effort. The profusion of headquarters soaks up huge resources yet, paradoxically, leads to each being inadequately staffed. A rationalisation of Australia's strategic and operational command structure would be necessary to prevent high-level decision-drag from defeating the potential tempo gains of manoeuvre warfare. It would also release resources.

At the sharp end the Joint Force Commander must be in-theatre, and therefore capable of operating from afloat. The friction caused during the Falklands War by geographic separation has been well documented. Modern networked communications can overcome many of the technical problems of 21 years ago but the human factor has not changed.

Existing tactical Command and Control (C2) doctrine is well proven and the case to change it is unproven. In particular, fiddling with the Commander Amphibious Task Force (CATF)/Commander Landing Force (CLF) relationship has a bad track record and should not be attempted. Furthermore, the Joint Force Commander (JFC) and the CATF each require comprehensive facilities and freedom from interference. The JFC should not, therefore, be located in the amphibious command ship under any circumstances. This implies a need for JFC facilities elsewhere in the fleet.

⁵ Turner, S., *Designing a Modern Navy*.

The self-evident answer to the fighter support question is the aircraft carrier. The argument that the ADF could not afford to procure, crew and maintain a carrier is fallacious; it is a question of priorities. If expeditionary operations are the Government's priority the real question is 'what do we give up to pay for it?' to which the answer has to be 'whatever we must'. There are significant elements of the existing ADF structure of little or no relevance to a maritime strategy. Capabilities must be aligned to strategically relevant joint operational concepts, not ingrained habits.

Spain, on a defence budget one-third smaller than Australia⁶ operates a modern carrier. Italy will operate two from 2007. Neither of these countries is an island nor located in a region as intrinsically maritime as South East Asia.

If a carrier is deemed politically unacceptable then the only alternative is expeditionary land-based air power. In any event it is a desirable complement to carrier power. The only way to secure, defend and improve the minor airfields on the myriad islands in the region is by amphibious power projection and the only way to provide the huge quantities of fuel required to support sustained air operations is by sea. In this case the RAN must be able to conduct effective, high-tempo amphibious operations and medium-scale logistic support from the sea in order to have the air cover it needs to gain sea control.

This would see Navy structured to generate three task forces: a Carrier Group, an Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) and an Expeditionary Support Group. It is worth considering each in turn.

Navy has lost the corporate expertise to conduct fixed-wing air operations and the pragmatic answer to creating a carrier aviation capability is a joint approach with Air Force doing the flying. Creation of a single point of authority for this would be wise if we wish to avoid replicating the inefficiencies that have plagued ADF amphibious development, which will be discussed below.

⁶ Spain's budget for 2002 was US\$8.6B according to the CIA Source Book 2003. Australia's was US\$11.39B.

Amphibious operations are widely recognised as the most challenging of all types of military operation. Non-specialised amphibious forces have a surprising record of success in amphibious warfare⁷ but only after painful, often disastrous introductions and subsequent near-vertical learning curves. This is an old, oft-repeated lesson. A force the size of the ADF cannot afford a Dieppe.⁸ It must get its amphibious operations right first time, every time. This demands an integrated, high readiness, purpose-designed Joint Amphibious Force. Nothing less is adequate for the high-tempo, STOM-based operations necessary to avoid bogging down into an attritional sloggy match.

An Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) is a self-contained littoral manoeuvre force. It comprises an Amphibious Ready Group (ARG),⁹ advance forces for shaping, including rapid environmental/threat assessment, and surface combatants. The inclusion of the surface combatants provides not only protection but also long-range precision land attack and close support to forces ashore.

At the tactical level, amphibious doctrine demands compliance with the first principle of Command and Control – Unity of Command. At the capability management level there is no parallel. The stove-piped nature of single-Service driven capability development has hamstrung ADF amphibious progress for

⁷ According to Gatchel (1996), of nearly one hundred significant landings conducted in the 20th century, only four were ever repulsed – the initial Japanese assault on Wake Island, Pandan in the Philippines, Milne Bay, and the British landing at Dakar. Gatchel, T.L., *At the Water's Edge – Defending Against Amphibious Assault*, Naval Institute Press, 1996. Two of these are questionable. The initial landing of a small part of the Japanese force at Pandan was successful, although reinforcements were delayed for a day by weather and American air attacks. The landing at Dakar was called off at the last minute when intelligence showed the enemy strength was too great. The initial Japanese assault on Wake Island on 11 December 1941 was repulsed, but the second attempt on 23 December was successful. The Japanese landed at Milne Bay on 26 August 1942 and established a beachhead, but they were unable to break out. The surviving troops were withdrawn on 4-5 September 1942 and no further landing was attempted.

⁸ An amphibious raid was conducted on the French port of Dieppe on 19 August 1942, with a force of just over 6000, primarily consisting of troops from the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division. The raid failed, with many troops pinned down on the beaches and subsequently killed or forced to surrender. The British lost 106 aircraft, a destroyer, 33 landing craft, and 29 tanks, and suffered 1380 dead, 1600 wounded and over 2000 captured. The Germans lost 48 aircraft and one shore battery, and suffered 345 dead and 268 wounded.

⁹ In an Australian sense this would be a more modest version of its US equivalent, which comprises a ground combat element of a Battalion Landing Team, an air combat element of attack and support helicopters, a combat support force all mounted in three ships. These comprise one multipurpose Amphibious Assault Ship with well deck (LHA) or multipurpose Amphibious Assault Ship with helicopter capability (LHD), one Amphibious Transport Dock with helicopter deck (LPD) and one Dock Landing Ship (LSD). See USN web site for details.

decades. Despite a superficially impressive order of battle (ORBAT), the ADF amphibious capability remains considerably less than the sum of its parts, as it has never exercised in its entirety, seems unlikely to in the foreseeable future, and shows little prospect of improving.

Almost every defence force with any serious amphibious aspirations designates clear responsibility for the net capability. In the United Kingdom (UK) one of the 2-Star operational afloat commanders is designated Commander UK Amphibious Force (COMUKAMPHIBFOR). He is also the effective 'owner' of amphibious capability – ships, helicopters and landing force. The Americans, Dutch and Spanish have different but no less effective arrangements. The similarity is that in all these countries amphibious capability has unambiguous ownership and permanent complemented staffs. In an Australian context a one-star appointment, rotating between Army and Navy, supported by a fairly small staff would be appropriate.

The purpose of the third element, the Expeditionary Support Group, is to provide logistic support to land and air forces operating ashore and should not be confused with naval replenishment, which must be integral to the Carrier Group and the ESG. The conceptual development of this force has not even begun.

No consideration of a naval structure to support maritime strategy can ignore submarines. The United States Navy (USN) is driving towards integration of submarines with surface forces and there is no doubt that this would bring great advantage if underwater network centric warfare is ever realised. There is, however, a fundamental difference between nuclear submarines with unlimited high-speed endurance and non-nuclear submarines. Full integration may play to the diesel submarine's weaknesses rather than its strengths. A balance between independent and non-independent operations would need to be derived, as sea denial remains indispensable to maritime strategy.

There are many obstacles to reorientation of Australian defence to a manoeuvrist stance. Many, such as funding and inter-service rivalry, are obvious but at the root of all these lies culture and that is the most difficult to change. Defence as a whole is wedded to the romanticism of the past – Gallipoli, Tobruk and the Citizen Army. World dynamics and Australian society have changed, almost beyond recognition and long lead-time, empire-oriented structures that served then are utterly inappropriate for the 'just enough, just in time' 21st Century.

Each single-Service culture is of inestimable value, but each also contains elements of environmental-myopia that obstruct the development of net defence capability. Each Service can see the faults of its partners but it behoves us to examine our own first.

Within the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) traditional surface warfare still holds a pre-eminent cultural position, much as battleship engagements did in the Royal Navy (RN) prior to the Second World War. Fleet-versus-fleet surface warfare has become the **least likely** form of combat.¹⁰ Enemy surface ships are low on the list of threats facing Australia and our own surface ships are a comparatively inefficient way of countering them compared to aircraft and submarines. Similarly, emphasising air defence using the ship's organic systems is asymmetric warfare reversed. If properly employed as part of a joint maritime manoeuvre force they should never find themselves in such a situation. A refocusing on sea assertion and power projection would see surface combatants revert to the escort role. This exploits their strengths¹¹ rather than exposing their vulnerabilities¹² by viewing them as stand-alone capital units.

In summary, the present generation of manoeuvrist theories contains little that is fundamentally new. What they do offer is a rejuvenated emphasis on manoeuvre in a holistic sense rather than a land-centric sense and when applied to Australia's geostrategic circumstances they lead logically to a joint maritime manoeuvre strategy. This is at odds with present Defence Policy, which proposes force projection without relating it to sea control. This is intellectually bankrupt. Similarly, MOLE and EAS in their present forms are not elements of a maritime strategy; they are expeditionary versions of a continental strategy. A joint concept for maritime archipelagic warfare is essential. It must address the contentious issue of the tactical command structure and this must be directed by a more logical and responsive higher headquarters structure.

Tribal culture is the greatest single-Service strength but, collectively, the greatest obstacle to a holistic approach to matching defence policy to national strategic needs. Shifting to a maritime strategy does not imply a navalist strategy. Comprehensive sea control is a joint task and new capabilities would be required by all three Services. Some of the most sacred of the sacred cows would have to be sacrificed to pay for them. A significant portion of the Defence budget is spent on barely deployable capabilities of little or no relevance to archipelagic manoeuvre operations.

¹⁰ Friedman, N., O'Brasky, J.S. & Tangredi, S.J., *Globalization and Surface Warfare*.

¹¹ See *Australian Maritime Doctrine*, pp. 48-51.

¹² See *Australian Maritime Doctrine*, pp. 51-54.

Within the RAN the requirement to develop carrier air power, conduct high-tempo amphibious manoeuvre and support land-based expeditionary air power would require fundamental change. The capital ships of joint maritime manoeuvre are the carrier and the assault ship. Surface combatants remain key enablers, as escorts, but no longer as the *raison d'être* of the Navy.

Whether RAN culture could absorb this remains the great unanswered question. If it cannot there is little point expecting the RAAF to convert to a genuinely expeditionary mindset or asking the Army to generate a US Marine Corps-style maritime manoeuvre focus. If, on the other hand, each of the three Services makes the cultural shift Defence as a whole will follow, to the immeasurable benefit of the Australian Government and our national security.

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