



**THE HON. JOEL FITZGIBBON MP**  
**Minister for Defence**

Saturday, 2 May 2009

**NEW FOCUS ON NON-LETHAL WEAPON  
TECHNOLOGY FOR ADF**

The Government today revealed plans to equip members of the Australian Defence Force deployed on operations with a variety of non-lethal weapons capabilities.

The Minister for Defence, the Hon. Joel Fitzgibbon MP, said that the Defence White Paper had identified that a range of non-lethal capabilities are required to provide deployed forces with greater options other than the use of lethal force.

“Graduated response options allow Defence personnel to use a range of techniques to respond to the different threat situations they are likely to face in operational environments,” Mr Fitzgibbon said.

“This is an important development, as it provides Australian Defence Force personnel with access to a greater variety of response options when operating in complex urban environments”.

These capabilities will provide operational commanders with a range of tactical options to protect the safety and security of deployed forces, which may include short-term incapacitating agents, physical barriers, visual and acoustic warning devices and non-lethal projectiles.

These non-lethal options have traditionally been used by law enforcement agencies and are designed to preserve life, property and support operational objectives.

Given the range of situations in which we may employ our soldiers, including alongside Australian Federal Police personnel, this capability enhancement will increase the effectiveness of our land force across a wide range of scenarios.

The 2009 Defence White Paper represents the most comprehensive statement on Defence ever produced. It affirms the Government’s commitment to the defence of Australia, the protection of our sovereign interests and the security and stability of our region.

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**A Defence Force for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

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