



## Townsville Defence Support Policy 2016

### Pride in our Defence family

The Townsville area hosts arguably the most significant Defence community in Australia, including critical bases and defence assets -

- Lavarack Barracks – the home of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, key elements of the 11<sup>th</sup> Brigade and other Army units totalling over 5000 personnel
- The RAAF Base, Garbutt - frontline RAAF support base of approximately 1500 personnel
- Naval capacity at the Port of Townsville

Directly supporting these Defence personnel are thousands of partners and families who live within our community and play significant roles in our schools, sporting clubs and businesses. Defence families are often at the forefront, volunteering on school P&Cs and coaching sporting teams. They also provide a significant proportion of the workforce in Townsville, and make a significant financial contribution to our economy.

Many Defence linked organisations do wonderful work in our community including the RSL, Cadets, Legacy, Mates4Mates, volunteer at military museums and many other organisations that promote the services and provide support to former members and their families.

The Townsville area is also the chosen home of many retired Defence personnel. Out of a population of 180,000 approximately 20,000 residents are part of the wider Townsville Defence Community.

Townsville has a long history of supporting our Defence community, particularly recognising the unique and superb work the Townsville ADF personnel do in times of crisis at home and on operations overseas. It also recognises the support provided by partners, families and the different Defence related organisations within the community.

Many see Defence as a federal issue. But it is at a community level where the ADF and their families and veterans live and we need to ensure they have our continued support.

Mayor Jenny Hill has a strong Defence background and a long association with the ADF. A Council led by Jenny Hill will continue to recognise and support the city's Defence community.

### Policy Objectives

The aim of the Townsville Defence Support policy is to proactively support the Defence Community and to seek greater opportunities for the city and its Defence family.

The Townsville City Council led by Mayor Jenny Hill will engage widely and work with Defence and Community stakeholders to provide appropriate local support to the Defence Community but also seek to increase commercial opportunities with Defence for local businesses. The Council will place a renewed emphasis on providing support for families and veterans at the local level to help ensure that those at risk do not fall between the cracks.

## **Key Announcements**

### **1. Establishment of Defence Community Accord**

Mayor Jenny Hill will establish a Defence Community Accord – a statement of mutual support between the civilian and defence community to recognise the sacrifice of the defence community and encourage support for the ADF, families and veterans living and working within the community.

The Accord is based on a successful model operating in Britain, which has a national covenant and community level covenants for Defence support.

Townsville will lead the way in Australia by establishing the nation's first Defence Community Accord in recognition of the deep history, influence and importance of the Defence forces to our city.

### **2. Form a Defence Community Panel**

Mayor Jenny Hill will establish a Defence Community Panel to give the wider Defence Community an opportunity to input ideas into Council and for Council and other community stakeholders to engage more proactively with Defence personnel and their families. Representation will be sought from:

- a. Lavarack Barracks
- b. RAAF Base Garbutt
- c. RSL
- d. Legacy
- e. Local military museums
- f. Defence Community Organisation (DCO)
- g. Partners Organisations (Townsville Airport / Port)
- h. Veterans Groups
- i. Business Community
- j. Voluntary Community
- k. Other interested parties

The Defence Community Panel will meet regularly with secretariat support from Council staff to seek the views and input from invited members. Local issues may include, but not limited to:

- a. ***Implement the Townsville Defence Community Accord to maximise the support to and from the Defence Community.*** This would include but not be limited to:
- b. Supporting work in the community for Defence partners

- c. Supporting local companies to employ veterans
- d. Highlight health and wellbeing issues for Defence Community members
- e. Develop opportunities for youth
- f. Encouraging Defence to maximise the use and opportunities provided by the Townsville Port for training and ship visits
- g. Aiming to ensure no veterans or families are homeless within the Townsville Community
- h. Council support for significant events like ANZAC Day, Battle of the Coral Sea, Fire Support Base Coral in Vietnam, and Legacy
- i. Welcome home parades for contingents and other Defence events that involve the broader community.
- j. Support our historical links with the US 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet and build on our relationship for the benefit of the community

The Defence Community Panel will be chaired by the Mayor or her representative and consist of nominated representatives from organisations listed above and others that may wish to participate.

The Defence Community Panel will focus on local issues to support our local Defence Community but is prepared to engage with State and Federal bodies to raise issues of significant concern and seek additional support when required.

### **3. Defence and Local Jobs**

Team Jenny Hill understands the economic importance of the Defence Forces to Townsville.

We see the opportunity to grow Defence investment in Townsville and to boost local jobs in our business community as it expands to support an enlarged defence family.

The Development of Northern Australia Agenda presents a huge opportunity for Townsville to further strengthen our position as THE key centre for national defence in northern Australia.

Of most significant is the release on Thursday 24 February of the National Defence White Paper by the Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull. The White Paper is a 10-year Defence Capability Plan and Defence Industry Policy. A number of its key objectives present huge opportunities for Townsville that Team Jenny Hill will work to capture:

- The White Paper's strong recommitment to regional engagement – the need to work closely with regional neighbours. Townsville is superbly positioned to lead this engagement. We will need to work hard as we compete with centres such as Darwin.
- A commitment of 5000 new uniformed personnel across all of the armed services presents an opportunity to strengthen troop and support numbers in Townsville.
- A commitment by the Federal Government to support front line garrisons with more effective logistic's support and asset maintenance.

### **Key Actions:**

- Mayor Jenny Hill will commit resources to a major submission to the Federal Government as part of its White Paper Policy consultation during 2016. Council will work closely with local and regional partner organisations, including Townsville Enterprise and the Townsville Chamber of Commerce, industry and business groups to present a unified submission that highlights our capabilities to support White Paper objectives.
- Council will focus on the development of a Defence Industry Precinct specifically to support the location and growth of defence related industries. Current federal arrangements that have Defence assets located in Townsville and supported in other locations are highly inefficient. Council and TEL will have a specific focus to bring these supporting assets to Townsville to remove the current crippling logistics inefficiencies. This will allow Townsville businesses to expand their services in those industries that Defence relies on. A major new Defence Logistics Hub at the Stuart Industrial Area in Townsville will be a focus of our lobbying. This ties in directly with the aim of the Federal Government's White Paper to support front line service delivery.
- Team Jenny Hill will work closely with local Defence personnel, support industries, the government and the broader local community to help expand Defence-related industries in Townsville. This includes strategies to build the capacity of local businesses that are able to support Army, RAAF, and Navy activities and assets.
- Under Mayor Jenny Hill, Council will seek industry and partner financial support to appoint a Defence Liaison Officer to coordinate efforts to attract new defence industries to Townsville. This will be funded by Council, business and partner agencies.

#### **4. Defence and International Connections**

Townsville has a remarkable military history as a garrison city. The city was the major staging point for the allied efforts in the Pacific during WW11. Our links are deep through our involvement with major wars from the Boer War, both World Wars, Malaya, Confrontasi, Vietnam, Korea, peace keeping operations and military deployments in Afghanistan and the Gulf Wars, Somalia, the Solomon's, Cambodia, and Bougainville. We remember tragedies such as the Black Hawke disaster in 1996. We will always remain a proud garrison city.

Mayor Jenny Hill will work to re-build many of the links that have been lost over the past decade – links such as our strong association with the US Seventh Fleet. As a Councillor in the Tony Mooney administration Jenny Hill forged strong associations with commanders of the US forces, including travelling to Japan and Korea to meet with senior US service personnel to promote US ship visits to Townsville. Jenny Hill will use those connections to push for a renewed and strengthened relationship with our US allies. This includes work to attract more regular US Ship visits, especially from the US Seventh Fleet but also their Indian fleet. Research in early 2000 showed that each visit by a major US ship injected some \$4m into the local economy. US ships are a great complement to cruise ship visitations and will ensure our Cruise Ship terminal is employed more regularly for the purpose intended. These visits provide opportunity to build international relationships and boost the local economy and Townsville's reputation as a world-class city and generous host.

**Further information: Jenny Hill**