



The Hon Bob Baldwin MP

**Shadow Minister for Defence Science, Personnel and Assisting Shadow
Minister for Defence**

4 November 2009

NO AMMUNITION FOR ADF RESERVES

The Shadow Minister for Defence Science, Personnel and Assisting Shadow Minister for Defence, the Hon. Bob Baldwin MP, today said that a recent report in the media highlighting cuts to the ADF Reserves was just the tip of the iceberg.

Mr Baldwin said that he had received numerous letters from concerned Reserve personnel regarding a range of issues, including a lack of ammunition for training.

'During a time of increased operational tempo, when our Reserve forces are being asked to do more of the heavy lifting, it is utter lunacy that their funding is being so severely cut,' Mr Baldwin said.

'This government promised that the \$20 billion worth of budget cuts to Defence would not affect those on the frontline – but clearly it has, and that is simply not acceptable.'

It has also been revealed recently that Defence will be cutting the Australian Regular Army (ARA) Reserve strength from 1170 to just 600 as part of its Strategic Reform Program.

'This cut will have a significant impact on Reserve training and comes at a time when the Reserves need more ARA support and not less,' Mr Baldwin said.

'These are exactly the types of cuts that Minister Faulkner and Minister Combet assured the ADF would not happen.'

One thousand continuous full time positions that Reserve personnel currently fill are also in the line of fire and will most likely be cut in the coming months if they haven't been already.

'What disappoints me the most is that these cuts are being made without the knowledge of Reserve personnel, who are simply being left to pay for the reckless spending of the Rudd Labor Government,' Mr Baldwin said.

'I urge Minister Combet to come clean and tell our Reserve personnel how much money he is cutting from their budget, how many positions he is cutting and what affect these cuts are having on long and short term Reserve capability and morale.'

Mr Baldwin said that the current policy was putting additional strain on serving Reserve personnel and that the Labor Government was sending the wrong message to our Defence Forces by cutting funding while demanding more from them.

'These cuts are a stab in the back for the Reserves, all while Minister Combet continues to sing their praises when ever a camera is present.'

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