

# Defence

## **What does the Outlook Report say about defence activities in the Great Barrier Reef?**

Management of the environmental impacts of defence training is undertaken by the Department of Defence in collaboration with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, the Australian Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts and the Queensland Department of Environment and Resource Management.

The limited area of defence operations and high level of performance in minimising potential environmental impacts means defence activities in the Great Barrier Reef Region pose minimal threat to the Reef.

Defence activities in the Great Barrier Reef directly contribute to the training and operations of Australia's defence services and the majority have negligible impacts on the Great Barrier Reef ecosystem. Many defence activities are conducted with dedicated shipboard and aerial observers. These personnel are able to collect data on marine wildlife sightings, as well as ensure activities are delayed if required.

Defence activities undergo thorough assessment, coordination and planning. In addition, the management agreement between the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Department of Defence ensures a shared understanding of potential threats to Great Barrier Reef values, external influences and key stakeholder issues.

## **How effective is the management of defence activities?**

The Outlook Report recognises the management of defence activities within the Marine Park is effective and defence activities pose minimal threats to the Great Barrier Reef.

Strategic documents, policies and regular meetings facilitate implementation of the joint management agreement between the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Department of Defence, and ensures consistency of approach with other management agencies.

Appropriate Defence resources are devoted to environmental management, staff exchanges, secondments, and joint patrols.

The knowledge base of defence activities, both within management agencies and the wider community has increased as a result of consultative meetings and reports documenting efforts to minimise environmental impacts on the marine environment.