



Stuart Robert MP

Federal Member for Fadden

Shadow Minister for Defence Science, Technology and Personnel

****MEDIA RELEASE****

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CUTS TO DEFENCE PUBLIC SERVICE JUST ANOTHER IDEA TAKEN FROM THE COALITION'S SAVINGS HANDBOOK

Defence Minister Smith's announcement that he will cut approximately 1,000 Defence civilian jobs, which will provide an estimated \$300m over the forward estimates, is nothing more than a re-badged commitment already made by the Coalition and is another Gillard Labor Government broken election promise.

Shadow Minister for Defence Science, Technology and Personnel, Stuart Robert, today said the Coalition had flagged these savings measures at the last federal election and identified specific savings over a month ago in order to offset its commitment to more fairly index military superannuation pensions.

'The Gillard Labor Government is so desperate for ideas it has to look to the Coalition to provide it with directions on how to find savings in the budget and manage the economy,' Mr Robert said.

'These cuts also represent another broken election promise, as the Gillard Labor Government committed to ensuring that all Defence Strategic Reform Program (SRP) savings would be invested back into Defence. Instead, these savings will now be used to offset wasteful government expenditure in other portfolios.'

'This is just another pathetic ploy by the Gillard Labor Government to give the illusion it is managing the budget and making tough decisions, when in reality it is so bereft of ideas that it has to borrow ideas from the Coalition and break election promises in an attempt to balance the books. The Gillard Labor Government has no understanding of what it means to be fiscally responsible.'

Mr Robert said the Coalition had identified these savings well in advance of the Defence Minister in order to offset the costs associated with the introduction of the *Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits Amendment (Fair Indexation) Bill 2010*.

'The fact that the Gillard Labor Government has broken another election promise and will use these savings to offset its wasteful expenditure program will leave a sour taste in the mouths of DFRDB and DFRB military superannuants, who have already been cheated by this government when it comes to the indexation of their military pensions,' Mr Robert said.

Mr Robert also said the Defence Minister must do much more than simply pick the low-hanging fruit if he is to provide the necessary resources to fund the government's capability wish list.

'These cuts are just another piecemeal offering from a Defence Minister who has a \$27b budget and a bloated civilian bureaucracy forecast to grow at a rate of 12.6% over the forward estimates in comparison to a military workforce that is only forecast to grow by 2.3%,' Mr Robert said.

Media enquiries: Richard Briedis – 0401 056 054