

"Defence greenwash on war games a toxic lie"

by Kim Stewart, BA, BSc honsA

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In 2005 the Australian Defence Force commissioned an environmental report into the effects of military training exercises in the Shoalwater Bay Training Area (SWBTA) just north of Yeppoon. While that report gave the military the greenwash they were probably looking for, it overlooked issues of the known toxicity of military chemicals and important social justice issues not addressed anywhere else. For the more cautious of us it also provided a valuable insight into the natural values at risk by war games in that area.

The SWBTA is a 454,500 hectare area with 300km of coastline, listed under the Ramsar, Jamba and Cambar treaties to protect birds and wetlands, is part of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and adjacent to the Byfield National Park. It is of vital importance to many endangered species and habitats. The military would like to convince us that practicing for war can be environmentally friendly. They would have us believe that thousands of troops, hundreds of tanks and vehicles, nuclear power warships, weapons testing, land and sea bombing and live firing can leave nothing but footprints and tank tracks.

However, war and the practicing for it, have grave environmental health implications. Agenda 21, the international covenant on sustainability, says in principle 24 that "Warfare is inherently destructive of sustainable development". The whole process of war is destructive to the environment. Practice for war, the testing of weapons and military training exercises use the same tools as real war. Toxic chemical pollution, unexploded shells, heavy vehicles and ships, and the waste of maintaining that equipment and the almost 30,000 troops using it at TS07 - all have effects on the environment and the communities they interact with. Military bases and war games put at risk our rights to a clean, safe and just environment to live in and the preservation of that environment for future generations. And they increase the public acceptance of violence and force as a means to an end.

These effects are not a matter of conjecture, they have been seen wherever military activities occur worldwide.

What's at risk?

Operation Talisman Sabre will utilise areas of high environmental significance, i.e. world heritage areas (WHA), natural heritage listed sites which include indigenous sites and Ramsar wetlands. These areas are habitat to many migratory birds and threatened species such as dugongs and humpback whales. Environmental impacts identified by the Department of Defence include effects on air quality, fire potential, noise pollution, waste disposal and spills and erosion from amphibian craft landings and weapon target zones."

***Ramsar listed Wetlands*:** The Shoalwater Bay/Corio Bay area adjacent to the SWBTA is a Ramsar listed habitat for waterfowl - meaning it is of vital importance for the world, not just Queensland or Australia. It is Australia's duty to protect these areas from any development as signatories to the Ramsar convention. The Ramsar convention protects wetland of international significance for their environmental benefits accrued to clean water. Certainly in the case of the Shoalwater region from Waterpark Creek arises the water catchment for the town of Yeppoon.

***Dugong habitat*:** Shoalwater seagrass meadows form one of the remaining food habitats for the endangered dugong - the use of sonar , turbulence and potential toxic spills put dugongs at risk.

The dugong *Dugong dugon* is suffering from population decline in many parts of its range. It is found in greater numbers in Australian waters than anywhere else in the world. Dugong numbers halved in the decade between 1990 and 2000. There are currently about 4000 dugongs in Australian waters, which is where they are concentrated.. Shoalwater Bay is important dugong habitats in Queensland due to its large north facing aspect making it an ideal site for seagrass to grow. The UN 2002 Report on Dugong recommends that remaining dugong habitats in Australia be protected. Allowing military training exercises for 300 days of the year is not protection.

***Sonar and sea life*:** Sonar is known to effect cetaceans, and dugongs also respond to sonar. Sonar was thought responsible for the deaths of whales and dolphins worldwide, the loud noises frightening the animals,

causing brain hemorrhages and 'the bends'. Sonar and ocean noise has also been found to affect fish, injuring or killing them by vibrating their swim bladders, reducing catches and affecting the viability of eggs. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority cite, "detonations of explosives, the use of live munitions and the use of active sonar and other acoustic devices" as threats to marine life in the area.

Green turtles: Shoal water Bay is absolutely vital breeding habitat for the endangered Green Turtle *Chelonia mydas*: it has the highest concentration in the world of this declining species, this is their premier breeding habitat. The population of Green turtles is thought to be declining worldwide. Turtles are sensitive to sonar emissions undersea and could be susceptible to naval use of sonar in the same way as cetaceans and dugong.

Other species: Shoalwater Bay is home to many species of fish and its protected situation and extensive mangrove ecosystem makes it an excellent fish refugia and breeding habitat. The seagrass meadows on which dugongs totally depend, are also the breeding place for economically important species such as rock lobsters *Panulirus cygnus*, blue swimmer crab *Portunus pelagicus* and 20 species of prawns. Other endangered species such as the logger head turtle also visit Shoalwater Bay. In fact the Maunsell TS07 Public Environment Report lists 38 endangered and vulnerable species in Shoalwater Bay alone, and over 100 endangered and vulnerable species in the combined training areas proposed for use in TS07.

Water: The local community have identified the area adjacent to Waterpark Creek, known as the Dismal sector, as part of the catchment area for the town of Yeppon's drinking water and draining into the RAMSAR wetland and the bay. It also happens to be the main site for live firing in the SWBTA.

Can we trust the armed forces to protect the environment?

Although the ADF's environment report says "No nuclear, chemical, biological or radiological munitions will be used during TS07" (Maunsell PER Final, April 2007), in reality all military vehicles and munitions use toxic chemicals and heavy metals with the potential to harm the environment. The toxicity of chemicals used in munitions was never considered in any part of the Maunsell environmental assessment. The mere

presence of nuclear powered vessels, the regular use of arms in Training and the maintenance of equipment poses risks.

The commitment of the US and Australian forces to "protect the environment, conserve biodiversity, and protect and preserve heritage... for future generations" (Maunsell PER Final 2007) is a hollow one given their environmental track records.

Environmental Track record: U.S. forces

The U.S. DoD have been described as the world's biggest industrial polluters, given the toxic legacy that their bases and facilities have created worldwide. Project Censored estimates that "the U.S. military generates 750,000 tons of toxic waste material annually, more than the five largest chemical companies in the U.S. combined. This pollution occurs globally as the U.S. maintains bases in dozens countries." The U.S. DOD has sought exemptions from many important environmental laws in the U.S. including the Migratory Bird Treaties Act, the Wildlife Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Air Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. Hardly the actions of good environmental stewards.

The US has around 2000 bases in worldwide. Military bases engage in major industrial operations - testing and use of munitions, fuelling and maintenance of vehicles, use of nuclear materials - creating a lethal cocktail of toxic substances including heavy metals, dioxins, and PCBs. Military bases are a vast and unaccountable multinational activity, generating an estimated (imperial) ton of toxic waste every minute. The military, especially the US, are thus one of the world's largest polluters - larger than the biggest five US chemical corporations combined.

The US DoDs 60 year presence on Vieques, in the Carribean, destroyed the environmental, health, social and economic basis of the island. Children die of cancer and many contracted asthma and respiratory diseases. Depleted Uranium and other heavy metal pollution, chemical pollution including TNT (an explosive compound linked to anemia and altered liver function), perchlorate (primary ingredient in rocket fuel, a thyroid toxicant) and RDX (an explosive compound and neurotoxicant), contaminate the land and water the biota including coral reefs, endangered species and archaeological sites are literally destroyed by constant bombing, navy sonar are linked to whale beachings unexploded ordinances, rusting

and abandoned shrapnel and vehicles litter and pollute the landscape, sunken fishing nets that still entrap fish and badly affect the ecosystem. The US DoDs presence has decimated the Vieqan economy. Far from financially benefiting the local economy, the effect of the 60 years naval presence caused an ecological and economic disaster. On several occasions the local subsistence fishermen were told they were not allowed to fish for weeks on end while war games were going on.

In 2003 the people of Vieques, after a campaign of civil disobedience that put their lives at risk within the bombing range, succeeded in getting the US DoD off their land. No compensation has been offered to this, or the many other communities devastated by U.S.DoD toxins.

Elsewhere US bases and personnel have similar impacts. In Japan, US bases at Okinawa are a source of ongoing protest and contaminate air, land and sea, the noise of jets making daily life unbearable for many. In Okinawa the US DoD is still trying after many years of protests, to build an airstrip and base on a coral reef adjacent to seagrass of vital importance to the rare Okinawa Dugong.

The kinds of activities the DoD engaged in at Vieques are the same kinds of things they want to do now on Australian soil and water: ship to shore bombing runs, testing of new weapons, aircraft and vehicles and on shore leave for troops. The US DoD need us now Vieques his closed - no where else can they do ship to shore bombing, it is banned on US shores.

Environmental Track record: ADF

The Australian army often boasts of their great environmental record, but they were complicit in the massive areas of radiation contamination in South Australia, or the dumping at sea of chemical warfare agents such as mustard gas off Cape Moreton, Townsville and Sydney, also the ocean dumping of decommissioned boats, other chemicals, ammunition and day to day naval waste. There are also air pollution effects around military airbases. And most of our military equipment is US made and hence has the same pollution issues that US DoD does.

In 2007 the ADF admitted to releasing radioactive material into the environment in Brisbane, four years after the fact. In 2007 a group of

ex-military boiler makers finally settled out of court after a protracted legal battle to show that they had not been protected from exposure to dangerous chemicals

The ADF have been less than responsive to the needs of the local people living near the SWBTA. These people are exposed to low flying aircraft, military convoys passing through their towns and vibrations and noise associated with live firing and bombing contributing to a stressful environment to live in. In one instance they have been told the military have "no sympathy" for them.

A eyewitness account by local fisherman Ronny Toon who has worked in the Shoalwater Bay area of over 20 years indicates that he has seen extensive damage to mangroves as a result of the use of white phosphorus, used for signaling, screening, and incendiary purposes. He was told, upon inquiry, by Senator Robert Hill that it was due to drought. This he judged to be a very inadequate assessment not based on the evidence, in his experience.

Commonly used chemicals and munitions globally cause environmental pollution

Perchlorate: the primary ingredient in rocket fuel, is the chemical causing the most concern worldwide with regards to the U.S. DoD's operations. It has been found contaminating groundwater in 20 U.S. states as a result of its use at rocket test sites, military bases, and perchlorate-production plants. It has been linked to thyroid problems, birth defects and newborn development. A recent study has found perchlorate is even contaminating the U.S. food supply and that 'safe' level standards are inadequate.

The people of Byfield and Yeppoon are concerned that perchlorate may be leaking into their water supply because the live firing area in the Dismal sector at SWBTA is part of the catchment for the Yeppoon water supply though Waterpark Creek. They have not been successful in getting local authorities to test the water. It is incumbent on the military to take action on their concerns.

White Phosphorus: was found responsible for the contamination of the estuarine environment at Eagle River Flats near Fort Richardson base, Alaska, U.S.A. The fishing grounds of local Alaskans was destroyed and thousands of waterbirds killed, "every year for almost two decades"

according to the Military Toxic Project. They also say unexploded ordnance "may exist in, on, and/or under up to 2 million acres of lands and waters outside the current boundaries of the base."

An eyewitness account by a local fisherman indicates that white phosphorus has been used at SWBTA, which is adjacent to the Ramsar listed Shoalwater/Corio Bay wetlands.

***Phosphorus markers*:** Marine markers are reputed to have washed ashore in Yeppoon near the SWBTA on two occasions in the months after the TS05 games. The marine markers were reported in the media to be red phosphorus, MK58 type.

Eyewitnesses say the ADF was slow to respond to the presence of the unexploded marker in a populated area. However, there was a fast response from the PR department, which led to misinformation being told the media, who reported the marker disposed of prematurely.

The presence of potentially explosive and dangerous military equipment on a populated beach is intolerable to the local population and presents a clear risk, especially to vehicles that drive on that beach. The marker also increases the mental stress to people living in the area.

***Ballast*:** The Maunsell PER says it is likely that ballast water will be expelled at non-defence ports. Ballast water is a known mechanism for the transfer of exotic species into Australian waters.

This risk is not peculiar to military vessels however, but it compounds the number of risks being introduced by the presence of U.S. vessels in environmentally sensitive areas.

***Marine debris*:** After TS05 games, shipboard generated domestic waste was found washed ashore on the Sunshine coast at Mudjimba and on the Sunshine Coast. Apparently it is the policy of the U.S. navy to dispose of their waste in this manner, and the bag was accompanied by a letter that said as much. The waste included plastic debris and paper.

Entanglement in marine debris can restrict an animal's movement, causing starvation, bodily infections, amputated limbs and drown marine creatures. The Australian Department of Environment and Heritage lists the Green Turtle as one species particularly vulnerable to the dangers of marine debris.

Harmful marine debris' has been listed as a key threatening process under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. Disposing of plastics at sea is totally prohibited by the International Convention. Despite this, the EPBCA excludes "marine debris resulting from the legal disposal of garbage at sea", which we presume includes the U.S Navy.

Plane crash: On their return journey from participation in maneuvers in Australian waters in January 2006 a U.S. FA-18 Hornet strike fighter plane crashed in the ocean 200km SE of Brisbane. No attempt was made to retrieve the \$37m aircraft and the public was not made aware of the potential environmental contaminants contained within that ship.

Social Justice & War Games

The effects of certain weapons on people's health are so widespread as to constitute a global health issue. The military pose many risks to environmental health: toxic contamination, noise pollution, sonar water pollution, and social upheaval including increased crimes, rapes and violence all are effects of militarisation and weapons usage worldwide.

Off duty US servicemen engage in drug dealing, prostitution, sexual assault, rape and even kill locals. They often get off without prosecution. During the 2005 Talisman Sabre games US personnel were arrested for drug offences. In 2005 there were 2, 374 reported sexual assaults in the U.S involving military personnel.

Sexual assault is a problem where ever troops are posted. Sexual assault within the U.S. Armed forces is widespread and perpetrators often unpunished, sometimes promoted. Indeed women in the US army are so afraid of sexual assault by their peers that several serving in Iraq in 2006 actually died of dehydration because they were afraid to drink late in the day in case they would need to use latrines late at night. The army tried to cover it up. There have been over 500 reports of sexual assault amongst troops in Iraq since 2002, the true figure probably much higher. Drink spiking and sexual harassment are also a problem within the ADF.

Anecdotal evidence seems to indicate that the rates of sexual harassment and assault of civilian women increases in Rockhampton during war games, although there are no hard statistics and it is recognised that many women

do not report to police. As far as we know, no action to combat sexual harrasment of the locals has been considered by the ADF or US DoD.

Indigneous land rights: The land on which the SWBTA is sited in the traditional land of the Durrumbal people. Despite claims that efforts have been made to consult with indigenous people during the 2005 TS games, we feel that this effort has been inadequate. We had no trouble talking to them by phone, while during the inquiry in the SWBTA expansion the ADF claimed they were uncontactable. The fact remains that the traditional landowners are beholden to the mmilitary for access to their own land and thus not at liberty to speak thier minds on this issue.

Social issues related to weapons

Both the US and the ADF use munitions that have serious human rights and environmental consequences. Sometimes in defiance of international agreements, such as the UN ban on DU munitions.

US: The US have the world's biggest arsenal of nuclear weapons on hair trigger alert. (They are Australia's biggest market for uranium). Without going into the massive issue of nuclear threats here, suffice to say the nuclear industry is perhaps the single greatest chemical threat to environmental health and justice worldwide. The US DoD has over 200 tons of plutonium in storage for weapons manufacture.

Other muntions issues that have caught the attention of social justice advocates include:

Cluster bombs - Cluster munitions are hotly opposed by many individuals and hundreds of groups, such as the Red Cross, the Cluster Munition Coalition and the United Nations, because of the high proportion of civilians that have fallen victim to the weapon. Unguided cluster bombs pose a threat to civilians for two reasons: they have a very wide area of effect, and they almost always leave behind unexploded bomblets. Some cluster bomblets, such as the CBU-87, are brightly colored in order to increase their visibility and warn off civilians. However, the color, coupled with their small and nonthreatening appearance has caused children to interpret them as toys. This problem was exacerbated in the War in Afghanistan (2001-present), when US forces dropped humanitarian rations

from airplanes with the same yellow colored packaging. In Vietnam, people are still being killed as a result of cluster bombs. In post-war Kosovo unexploded cluster bomblets caused more civilian deaths than landmines.

Despite the Australian Govts support for banning and removing landmines, they do not extend this to cluster bombs, which for many purposes are land mines. On December 5, 2006, an Australian senator introduced a private bill, titled the 'Cluster Munitions (Prohibition) Bill' 2006, to prohibit Australia's use, manufacture and possession of cluster munitions. This bill is not supported by the Australian Government and as a result is unlikely to be passed by Parliament. However, the Australian Defence Force does not currently possess stocks of cluster munitions.

Depleted Uranium munitions - "Depleted uranium munitions are not in the ADF inventory and not permitted for use by foreign forces" (Maunsell PER Final 2007). Despite this disclaimer for the TS07 games, the US military DO continue to use depleted uranium shells despite their being banned by the United Nations. It is likely that, although prohibited for use, DU shells will be present on US vessels, although they have a policy of 'neither confirm nor deny' such allegations.

DU has also been used by the ADF in Australia's training areas in the 1980s, although they are not clear about exactly where, the timing would indicate that much of Australia's DU was used at the Shoalwater bay training area. The ADF maintain that "there is no conclusive scientific or medical evidence that exposure to depleted uranium munitions is a health risk."

Conclusion

In April 2007 Maunsell released their revised Public Environment Report for the SWBTA. After receiving hundreds of submissions from concerned citizens, environmental groups and peace groups opposing the TS07 war games, they concluded that the general public "take the time to understand the commitments Defence is making to ensure environmental sustainability". Well, I understand them very well as an elaborate and superficial green washing exercise that fails to take into consideration the many and varied environmental and social effects of war games. Because the ADF

sees Shoalwater as "Australia's single most important area for the conduct of amphibious and combined arms exercises" any other conclusion would be surprising.

TS-07discussion mailing list
TS-07discussion@peaceconvergence.com
<http://lists.peaceconvergence.com/mailman/listinfo/ts-07discussion>

This list is specifically a DISCUSSION GROUP to organise for the Peace Convergence and related events during the Talisman Sabre war games in 2007.

We ask participants to be mindful of the purpose of this list and to not post items that do not relate directly to organising for TS07.

This is a private list and will not be publicly archived.

Subject:
[TS-07discussion] article: Defence greenwash on war games a toxic lie
From:
"kim" <kkaos@riseup.net>
Date:
Thu, 17 May 2007 12:02:21 +1000 (EST)
To:
ts-07discussion@peaceconvergence.com

Article written for publication - use as you will.

*kim

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Training Area (SWBTA) just north of Yeppoon. While that report gave the military the greenwash they were probably looking for, it overlooked issues of the known toxicity of military chemicals and important social justice issues not addressed anywhere else. For the more cautious of us it also provided a valuable insight into the natural values at risk by war games in that area.

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***Other species*:** Shoalwater Bay is home to many species of fish and its protected situation and extensive mangrove ecosystem makes it an excellent fish refugia and breeding habitat. The seagrass meadows on which dugongs totally depend, are also the breeding place for economically important species such as rock lobsters *Panulirus cygnus*, blue swimmer crab *Portunus pelagicus* and 20 species of prawns. Other endangered species such as the logger head turtle also visit Shoalwater Bay. In fact the Maunsell TS07 Public Environment Report lists 38 endangered and vulnerable species in Shoalwater Bay alone, and over 100 endangered and vulnerable species in the combined training areas proposed for use in TS07.

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The presence of potentially explosive and dangerous military equipment on a populated beach is intolerable to the local population and presents a clear risk, especially to vehicles that drive on that beach. The marker also increases the mental stress to people living in the area.

***Ballast*:** The Maunsell PER says it is likely that ballast water will be expelled at non-defence ports. Ballast water is a known mechanism for the transfer of exotic species into Australian waters.

This risk is not peculiar to military vessels however, but it compounds the number of risks being introduced by the presence of U.S. vessels in environmentally sensitive areas.

***Marine debris*:** After TS05 games, shipboard generated domestic waste was found washed ashore on the Sunshine coast at Mudjimba and on the Sunshine Coast. Apparently it is the policy of the U.S. navy to dispose of their waste in this manner, and the bag was accompanied by a letter that said as much. The waste included plastic debris and paper.

Entanglement in marine debris can restrict an animals movement, causing starvation, bodily infections, ampute limbs and drown marine creatures. The Australian Department of Environment and Heritage lists the Green Turtle as one species particularly vulnerable to the dangers of marine debris.

Harmful marine debris' has been listed as a key threatening process under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. Disposing of plastics at sea is totally prohibited by the International Convention. Despite this, the EPBCA excludes "marine debris resulting from

the legal disposal of garbage at sea", which we presume includes the U.S Navy.

***Plane crash*:** On their return journey from participation in maneuvers in Australian waters in January 2006 a U.S. FA-18 Hornet strike fighter plane crashed in the ocean 200km SE of Brisbane. No attempt was made to retrieve the \$37m aircraft and the public was not made aware of the potential environmental contaminants contained within that ship.

Social Justice & War Games

The effects of certain weapons on people's health are so widespread as to constitute a global health issue. The military pose many risks to environmental health: toxic contamination, noise pollution, sonar water pollution, and social upheaval including increased crimes, rapes and violence all are effects of militarisation and weapons usage worldwide.

Off duty US servicemen engage in drug dealing, prostitution, sexual assault, rape and even kill locals. They often get off without prosecution. During the 2005 Talisman Sabre games US personnel were arrested for drug offences. In 2005 there were 2, 374 reported sexual assaults in the U.S involving military personnel.

Sexual assault is a problem where ever troops are posted. Sexual assault within the U.S. Armed forces is widespread and perpetrators often unpunished, sometimes promoted. Indeed women in the US army are so afraid of sexual assault by their peers that several serving in Iraq in 2006 actually died of dehydration because they were afraid to drink late in the day in case they would need to use latrines late at night. The army tried to cover it up. There have been over 500 reports of sexual assault amongst troops in Iraq since 2002, the true figure probably much higher. Drink spiking and sexual harassment are also a problem within the ADF.

Anecdotal evidence seems to indicate that the rates of sexual harassment and assault of civilian women increases in Rockhampton during war games, although there are no hard statistics and it is recognised that many women do not report to police. As far as we know, no action to combat sexual harassment of the locals has been considered by the ADF or US DoD.

***Indigenous land rights*:** The land on which the SWBTA is sited in the traditional land of the Durrumbal people. Despite claims that efforts have been made to consult with indigenous people during the 2005 TS games,

we feel that this effort has been inadequate. We had no trouble talking to them by phone, while during the inquiry in the SWBTA expansion the ADF claimed they were uncontactable. The fact remains that the traditional landowners are beholden to the military for access to their own land and thus not at liberty to speak their minds on this issue.

Social issues related to weapons

Both the US and the ADF use munitions that have serious human rights and environmental consequences. Sometimes in defiance of international agreements, such as the UN ban on DU munitions.

US: The US have the world's biggest arsenal of nuclear weapons on hair trigger alert. (They are Australia's biggest market for uranium). Without going into the massive issue of nuclear threats here, suffice to say the nuclear industry is perhaps the single greatest chemical threat to environmental health and justice worldwide. The US DoD has over 200 tons of plutonium in storage for weapons manufacture.

Other munitions issues that have caught the attention of social justice advocates include:

Cluster bombs - Cluster munitions are hotly opposed by many individuals and hundreds of groups, such as the Red Cross, the Cluster Munition Coalition and the United Nations, because of the high proportion of civilians that have fallen victim to the weapon. Unguided cluster bombs pose a threat to civilians for two reasons: they have a very wide area of effect, and they almost always leave behind unexploded bomblets. Some cluster bomblets, such as the CBU-87, are brightly colored in order to increase their visibility and warn off civilians. However, the color, coupled with their small and nonthreatening appearance has caused children to interpret them as toys. This problem was exacerbated in the War in Afghanistan (2001-present), when US forces dropped humanitarian rations from airplanes with the same yellow colored packaging. In Vietnam, people are still being killed as a result of cluster bombs. In post-war Kosovo unexploded cluster bomblets caused more civilian deaths than landmines.

Despite the Australian Govts support for banning and removing landmines,

they do not extend this to cluster bombs, which for many purposes are land mines. On December 5, 2006, an Australian senator introduced a private bill, titled the 'Cluster Munitions (Prohibition) Bill' 2006, to prohibit Australia's use, manufacture and possession of cluster munitions. This bill is not supported by the Australian Government and as a result is unlikely to be passed by Parliament. However, the Australian Defence Force does not currently possess stocks of cluster munitions.

Depleted Uranium munitions - "Depleted uranium munitions are not in the ADF inventory and not permitted for use by foreign forces" (Maunsell PER Final 2007). Despite this disclaimer for the TS07 games, the US military DO continue to use depleted uranium shells despite their being banned by the United Nations. It is likely that, although prohibited for use, DU shells will be present on US vessels, although they have a policy of 'neither confirm nor deny' such allegations.

DU has also been used by the ADF in Australia's training areas in the 1980s, although they are not clear about exactly where, the timing would indicate that much of Australia's DU was used at the Shoalwater bay training area. The ADF maintain that "there is no conclusive scientific or medical evidence that exposure to depleted uranium munitions is a health risk."

Conclusion

In April 2007 Maunsell released their revised Public Environment Report for the SWBTA. After receiving hundreds of submissions from concerned citizens, environmental groups and peace groups opposing the TS07 war games, they concluded that the general public "take the time to understand the commitments Defence is making to ensure environmental sustainability". Well, I understand them very well as an elaborate and superficial green washing exercise that fails to take into consideration the many and varied environmental and social effects of war games. Because the ADF sees Shoalwater as "Australia's single most important area for the conduct of amphibious and combined arms exercises" any other conclusion would be surprising.

TS-07discussion mailing list

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<http://lists.peaceconvergence.com/mailman/listinfo/ts-07discussion>

This list is specifically a DISCUSSION GROUP to organise for the Peace Convergence and related events during the Talisman Sabre war games in 2007.

We ask participants to be mindful of the purpose of this list and to not post items that do not relate directly to organising for TS07.

This is a private list and will not be publicly archived.