

DEFENCE.

THE colonists of Australasia have always manifested an objection to the maintenance of a large standing army, and shown a disposition to rely mainly upon the patriotism and valour of the citizens for their own defence. As the Commonwealth, however, possesses a more or less complete system of fortifications armed with expensive ordnance, which requires a more regular and constant attendance than could well be bestowed by those who devote only a portion of their time to military affairs, it is necessary that there should be in each of the states a small permanent military force, consisting for the most part of artillery and submarine miners, whose chief duty is to man the fortifications and keep the valuable armaments therein in a state of efficiency, to be ready for any emergency. At the same time, it is expected that they will prove the nucleus for an effective defence force if ever hostilities should unfortunately occur. The responsibility for the defence of Australia now lies with the Federal Government, and, since it assumed control the forces have been reconstructed and reorganised, while the expenditure has been considerably reduced.

Under the present scheme, which is in accordance with the provisions of the Defence Act of 1903, which came into operation on the 1st March, 1904, the organisation of the forces is as follows:—

1. A Permanent Cadre Force, which includes an administrative and instructional staff, the Royal Australian Artillery Regiment and small detachments of Engineers, Army Medical Corps, and Army service Corps, &c. The senior officers are the principal commanders, administrative staff, and instructors during peace, and will be the chief leaders and staff officers in war. This force will also serve as a valuable stiffening in time of war.

(2) A Field Force comprising six brigades of light horse and three brigades of infantry, who, in a national emergency, will undertake active operations in the field for the defence of the Commonwealth as a whole. These troops are militia, and are divided among the six states on a population basis.

(3) A Garrison Force which provides the necessary garrisons, and a small district reserve for the local defence of each of the six states.

The troops comprising this branch are mainly volunteers and are unpaid. It is proposed, however, that all the Light Horse Artillery, Engineers, and Departments allotted to garrison service, who are not already militia, shall be termed militia, and be paid accordingly. Under the system as outlined above, the permanent staff will be reserved mainly for administrative and staff duties in peace, and for special duties in time of war. The principle is throughout aimed at that the militia and volunteer officers should carry out in times of peace the duties which would be thrust on them in time of war. Under the Act it is provided that members of the military forces, unless they voluntarily agree to do so, shall not be liable to serve outside the limits of Commonwealth territory.

The following table shows the strength of the military forces maintained in each state as at 30th June, 1904. The total number of men of military ages (from 20 to 40 years) in Australia was ascertained at the Census of 1901 to be 644,500; the total forces shown below (19,880) amount to 3·1 per cent. of the number capable of bearing arms, which is an extremely small proportion. In New Zealand the proportion is 10·1 per cent.

State.	Paid.	Militia or Partially Paid.	Volunteers.	Total Forces.
Headquarters Staff	26	.....	.....	26
New South Wales.....	491	4,537	2,257	7,285
Victoria	374	4,360	1,000	5,734
Queensland	230	2,439	161	2,830
South Australia.....	55	1,175	469	1,699
Western Australia	60	425	769	1,254
Tasmania	42	.....	1,010	1,052
Commonwealth	1,278	12,936	5,666	19,880
New Zealand	544	.....	12,634	13,178
Australasia	1,822	12,936	18,300	33,058

Included in the 544 paid in New Zealand there are 189 officers of the New Zealand Militia Active List who have nearly all seen service in South Africa. There is no partially-paid force in the colony, but, subject to certain limitations, all males of ages 17 and upwards may be called upon for service in time of national emergency.

The relative strength of the various arms in the Commonwealth states may be summarised as follows:—

Staff, administrative and educational	272
Artillery—	
Field	1,073
Garrison	1,858
Engineers	663
Mounted troops.....	4,473
Infantry	10,627
Army Service Corps	204
Army Medical Corps	523
Veterinary department	16
Ordnance department	117
Pay department	44
Total.....	19,880

The Defence Act provides that the reserve forces shall consist of (a) members of rifle clubs constituted in the manner prescribed, and (b) persons who, having served in the active forces or otherwise as is prescribed, are enrolled as members of the reserve forces. Power is also given for the establishment and maintenance of Cadet Corps consisting of (a) Boys over twelve years of age who are attending school, and (b) Youths between fourteen and nineteen years of age who are not attending school, and who will form a Senior Cadet Corps. Cadets are not liable for active service. All military cadet corps in a military district are under the orders of the District Commandant of that district. In March, 1904, under instructions from the Minister of Defence, a special committee was appointed to report on the organisation of the cadet system. The committee recommended that the cadets should be organised under the Commonwealth military system, but in conjunction with the Education Departments of each state. The full development of the system is, however, at present retarded by lack of funds. The following table shows the strength of reserves, rifle clubs, and cadet corps on the 30th June, 1904:—

State.	Reserve of Officers and Unattached List.	Rifle Clubs.	Cadets.
New South Wales.....	199	2,931	3,969
Victoria	198	18,436	4,068
Queensland	94	2,867	901
South Australia	54	3,412	.....
Western Australia	26	1,075	.....
Tasmania	49	.....	164
Commonwealth	620	28,721	9,102
New Zealand	77	2,546	2,826
Australasia.....	697	31,267	11,928

In addition to the military forces enumerated, there are in four of the states small corps of Naval Volunteer Artillery, or partially-paid forces of a similar character, capable of being employed either as light artillery land forces or on board the local war vessels. The strength of these marine forces on the 30th June, 1904, was as follows:—

State.	Permanent Forces.	Militia.	Total.
New South Wales.....	3	335	338
Victoria	102	97	199
Queensland	37	353	390
South Australia.....	20	105	125
Commonwealth	162	890	1,052

Under the Defence Act of 1904, members of the Naval Forces may be required to serve either within or beyond the limits of the Commonwealth for the purpose of training, or in time of war for the defence and protection of the Commonwealth and of the several states.

Including the reservists and members of rifle clubs, the combined forces of the Commonwealth would be about 50,000 strong, and of these about three-fifths could be mobilised in a very short time in any one of the states of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, or South Australia. As shown above, some of the states have also cadet companies, consisting of youths attending school, who are taught the use of arms so as to fit them, on reaching manhood, for taking a patriotic share in the defence of their country.

The outbreak of hostilities with the Boers in October, 1899, served to demonstrate the strength of the loyalty of these states to the mother country. From all parts of Australasia members of the various defence forces, as well as civilians, volunteered for service with the Imperial troops in South Africa. The total number of men despatched in the various contingents was 22,928. The table below shows the number of men and horses sent from each state:—

State.	Officers.	Non-commissioned Officers and Men.	Horses.
New South Wales	327	6,000	5,877
Victoria	183	3,393	3,878
Queensland	143	2,756	3,085
South Australia	78	1,450	1,524
Western Australia	63	1,160	1,044
Tasmania	35	827	725
Commonwealth	829	15,586	16,133
New Zealand	342	6,171	6,662
Australasia	1,171	21,757	22,795

In addition to the above, several special service officers were, at the request of the colonial Governments, attached to the British troops for the purpose of gaining experience, and 14 nurses were despatched from New South Wales.

The states again offered to assist Great Britain on the outbreak of hostilities in China. The Imperial Authorities accepted the offer, and contingents of naval volunteers were despatched from New South Wales and Victoria numbering 260 and 200 men respectively, while South Australia equipped and sent the gunboat Protector.

NAVAL DEFENCE.

The boundaries of the Australian Naval Station have been defined as follow :—From 95° E. long. by the parallel of 10° S. lat. to 130° E. long. ; thence north to 2° N. lat., and along that parallel to 136° E. long. ; thence north to 12° N. lat., and along that parallel to 160° W. long. ; thence south to the Equator, and east to 149° 30' W. long. ; bounded on the south by the Antarctic Circle ; and including the numerous groups of islands situated within the limits specified.

The defence of Australasia and its trade is entrusted to ships of the Imperial navy, under an agreement entered into between the British Government and the Governments of the Commonwealth and New Zealand. The agreement provides that the naval force on the Australian Station shall consist of not less than—

- 1 Armoured cruiser, first-class ;
- 2 Second-class cruisers ;
- 4 Third-class cruisers ;
- 4 Sloops ;

and of a Royal Naval Reserve of 25 officers and 700 seamen and stokers.

This force is under the control and orders of the Naval Commander-in-Chief on the Australian Station. One of the ships is to be kept in reserve, and three are to be partly manned and used as drill ships for training the Royal Naval Reserve, the remainder being kept in commission and fully manned. The three drill ships and one other vessel are to be manned by Australians and New Zealanders as far as procurable, paid at special rates, and enrolled in proportion to the relative population of the Commonwealth and New Zealand, but the vessels are to be officered by officers of the Royal Navy and of the Royal Naval Reserve. In order to insure the inclusion of Australian-born officers in the Royal Navy, 8 nominations for cadetships are to be given annually in the Commonwealth and 2 in New Zealand. In consideration of the services rendered, the Commonwealth is to pay five-twelfths and New Zealand one-twelfth of the total annual cost of maintenance, provided that the total amount to be paid in one year shall not exceed £200,000 and £40,000 respectively. In reckoning the total annual cost, a sum equal to 5 per cent. on the prime cost of the ships composing the naval

force is to be included. The agreement covers a period of ten years, and only terminates if notice to that effect shall have been given two years previously, viz., at the end of the eighth year, or at the end of any subsequent year, and then two years from such date. In time of peace one drill ship and one other cruiser are to be stationed in the waters of New Zealand as their headquarters, but they may be temporarily removed if any emergency arises to justify such a course. The base of the naval force is to be the ports of Australia and New Zealand, and their sphere of operations the waters of the Australia, China, and East Indies Stations where the Admiralty believe they can most effectively act against hostile vessels which threaten the trade or interests of Australia and New Zealand. No change in this arrangement can be made without the consent of the Governments of the Commonwealth and New Zealand, and nothing in the agreement shall be taken to mean that the naval force named therein shall be the only force used in Australasian waters should the necessity arise for a larger force. The agreement was embodied in the Naval Agreement Bill and passed by the Commonwealth Parliament, being assented to on the 28th August, 1903. It has also been passed by the New Zealand Parliament. Prior to this agreement the defence of the Australasian coast was entrusted to the British ships on the Australian Station and the Australasian Auxiliary Squadron.

The vessels of the fleet which are on service are detailed below.

Name.	Date of Launch.	Load Displacement.	Draught.	Length.	Beam.	Indicated Horse-power.	Measured Mile Speed.	Armament.	Seagoing Complement.
Euryalus ..	1901	12,000	20 9	440	69 6	21,000	21·5	Two 9·2-in., 12 6-in (14 12-pr., 3 3-pr.) q., 2 M., 2 S.T.	745
Phœbe	1890	2,575	15 6	265	41 0	7,500	19·3	(Eight 4·7, 8 3-pr.) q., 1 L.M., 4 M., 4 T.	219
Katoomba ..	1889	2,575	15 6	265	41 0	7,500	19·3	(Eight 4·7-in., 8 3-pr.)q., 1 L.M., 4 M., 4 T.	216
Mildura	1889	2,575	15 6	265	41 0	7,500	19·3	(Eight 4·7-in., 8 3-pr.)q., 1 L.M., 4 M., 4 T.	216
Tauranga ..	1889	2,575	15 6	265	41 0	7,500	19·3	(Eight 4·7-in., 8 3-pr.)q., 1 L.M., 4 M., 4 T.	216
Wallaroo ...	1890	2,575	15 6	265	41 0	7,500	19·3	(Eight 4·7-in., 8 3-pr.)q., 1 L.M., 4 M., 4 T.	216
Psyche	1898	2,135	15 10	309	36 6	5,000	20·3	(Eight 4-in., 8 3-pr.)q., 3 M., 2 T.	219
Pylades	1884	1,420	16 11	200	38 0	1,510	12·6	Fourteen 6-in., 1 L.M., 4 M. ...	171
Clio	1903	1,070	11 6	185	33 0	1,400	13·5	(Six 4-in., 4 3-pr.) q., 3 M.	113
Mutine	1900	980	13 1	180	33 0	1,400	13·4	(Six 4-in., 4 3-pr.) q., 2 M.	105
Torch	1894	960	13 1	180	32 6	1,100	13·4	(Six 4-in., 4 3-pr.) q., 2 M.	102
Cadmus	1903	1,070	11 6	185	33 0	1,400	13·5	(Six 4-in., 4 3-pr.) q., 3 M.	110
Penguin	1876	1,130	14 0	180	38 0	700	10·1	One L.M., 2 M.	137

The Euryalus is classified as a first-class armoured cruiser. The other vessels are unarmoured, those in the list from the Phœbe to the Pylades being classed as third-class cruisers. The Clio, Mutine, Torch, and Cadmus are sloops, while the Penguin is a surveying vessel.

Sydney is the headquarters of the fleet, and ranks as a first-class naval station, extensive repairing yards and store-houses having been provided for the accommodation of ships of war.

The Commonwealth possesses a number of vessels which are available for harbour defence in Victoria, Queensland, and South Australia. The names and classes of the vessels in Victoria are :—

Name.	Class.	Displacement.	Armament.
Corberus	Armoured turret ship (twin screw).	tons. 3,480	Four 10-in. 18-ton M.L.R., six 6-pdr. Q.F., four 1-in. Nordenfeldt—4 barrels.
Countess of Hoptoun.	First-class steel torpedo boat.	120	Three 14-in. Mark IX R.G.F. torpedoes, and two 2-barrel Nordenfeldt 1-in. M. guns.
Childers	do do ..	63	Two 14-in. Fiume torpedoes, and two 1-pdr. Hotchkiss Q.F. guns.
Nepean	Second-class steel torpedo boat.	12	Two 14-in. Mark IV Fiume torpedoes.
Lonsdale	do do ..	12	do do do
Gordon	Wooden torpedo boat ..	12	Two 14-in. Mark IV Fiume torpedoes, three 2-barrel 1-in. Nordenfeldt guns.

There are two vessels available for harbour defence in Queensland, and particulars of their armament are shown below :—

Name.	Class.	Displacement.	Armament.
Gayundah.....	Steel gunboat (twin screw)	Tons. 360	One 8-in. B.L., one 6-in. B.L. Armstrong, two 3-pdr. 1½-in. Nordenfeldt, one 1-in. four-barrelled Nordenfeldt, one Maxim.
Paluma	do ..	360	One 6-in. B.L.; two 5-in. B.L.; two 1½-in. Q.F. Nordenfeldts; one 1-in. four-barrelled Nordenfeldt; one 0·45-in. five-barrelled Nordenfeldt.

In South Australia one twin-screw steel cruiser, the Protector, of 920 tons, is available. The armament of the Protector consists of one 8-in. 12-ton B.L., five 6-in. 4-ton B.L., and four 3-pdr. Q.F. This vessel has lately seen service in the war with China, and was reported by the Commander-in-Chief of that station to be "an efficient and well-kept man-of-war, reflecting credit on captain, officers, and men." There are also some large arms available in South Australia, comprising two 6-in. 5-ton B.L. guns, intended for use in an auxiliary gun-vessel, and five Gatling machine guns for boat or land service, while in Tasmania there is one torpedo boat with dropping gear for Whitehead torpedoes. New Zealand possesses three Thornycroft torpedo boats and two steam launches fitted for torpedo work.

COST OF DEFENCE.

The following table shows the expenditure by the Commonwealth Government on naval and military defence, exclusive of expenditure under the Naval Agreement Act, for the year ended 30th June, 1904 :—

State.	Amount.	Per head.
	£	s. d.
New South Wales	270,331	3 10
Victoria.....	228,768	3 9
Queensland	100,339	3 10
South Australia	66,323	3 7
Western Australia	43,093	3 11
Tasmania	33,677	3 9
Commonwealth	£742,531	3 9

The expenditure in each state, for the same period under the terms of the Naval Agreement Act, is given below :—

State.	£
New South Wales	88,375
Victoria	41,947
Queensland	18,030
South Australia.....	22,832
Western Australia	13,961
Tasmania	11,081
Commonwealth	£196,226

The annual contribution is £200,000. The amount paid includes an adjustment for arrears and over-payments under the old agreement. For New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania there were arrears of £23,180, £6,052, £3,559, and £2,939 respectively, while in Victoria and Queensland the sums overpaid amounted to £13,085, and £5,377.

In all the states, with the exception of Western Australia, a certain amount of money has been spent out of loans for purposes of defence. The amounts expended in 1903-4 were as follow :—

	£
Queensland	9,408
South Australia	1,157
Commonwealth	10,565
New Zealand.....	38,724
Australasia	£49,289

The total loan expenditure in each state for defence purposes to the end of the financial year 1903-4 was as follows:—

State.	Amount. £	Per head. £. s. d.
New South Wales	1,109,491	0 15 7
Victoria	149,324	0 2 10
Queensland	386,505	0 14 11
South Australia	293,840	0 16 0
Tasmania	128,180	0 14 4
Commonwealth	2,067,340	0 10 7
New Zealand	772,563	0 18 10
Australasia	£2,839,903	0 12 0

The figures are exclusive of a sum of £312,485 expended in connection with the naval station at Port Jackson. Had this amount been taken into consideration, the total outlay in New South Wales would have reached about £1 per head, and for the Commonwealth 12s. 2d.

The above does not represent the whole cost of the fortifications, as large sums have from time to time been expended from the general revenues of the states in the construction of works of defence; the amount of such payments, however, it is now impossible to determine.