



INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITY

HMAS CAIRNS (DEFENCE)

PROPONENT:	Advance Cairns
COUNCIL:	Cairns Regional Council
STATE ELECTORATE:	Cairns
FEDERAL ELECTORATE:	Leichhardt



CURRENT FOCUS

Commit to home basing at least four Offshore Patrol Vessels in Cairns and advance the second stage pledge to allow for a \$420M spend in the decade to 2026.

ISSUE

Additional investment in port infrastructure at HMAS Cairns is required to provide long-term sustained growth for the Royal Australian Navy.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Department of Defence brings forward the second stage of its \$300M pledge in HMAS Cairns to allow for a \$420M spend in the decade to 2026 and delivers on its commitment to allocate at least four Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs) to be home based in Cairns.

OVERVIEW

HMAS Cairns is one of the few ports in Australia that can offer the Defence Department significant expansion opportunities in berth and land facilities.

HMAS Cairns employs 900 naval and civilian personnel. It is the homeport for fourteen naval vessels and has a geographic boundary which extends from Rockhampton to Thursday Island. Its primary responsibility is to provide maintenance, logistical and administrative support for Cairns based units and provide refit and training support for neighbouring Pacific Island nations (Pacific Class Patrol Boats).

It has been calculated that for every dollar spent on Defence in Cairns, the multiplier effect equates to over \$5 in other sectors of the economy. Defence investment of \$420M would have an impact of over \$2B on the regional economy – a strategic investment in both the regional economy as well as Northern Australia.

The rationales for basing OPVs at HMAS Cairns are as follows:

- HMAS Cairns' strategic geographical location in Northern Australia.
- HMAS Cairns' location is supported by and is adjacent to the Cairns Marine Precinct (which has mature sustainment capability).
- HMAS Cairns is recognised for its efficiency and productivity and has significant potential for expansion.
- The existing Navy base and infrastructure has the capacity to grow to accommodate the OPVs in a cost-effective manner.
- Recruitment and retention of personnel is understood to be a key issue for Defence. This region boasts one of the highest retention rates in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) due to the lower costs of living and a lifestyle conducive to Defence Force families.
- This region is "Defence friendly" and is willing to work in partnership with the ADF to maintain, develop and grow its presence and capability in this region.
- Tropical North Queensland has the largest marine services industry in Northern Australia and could be strategically supported to further develop its capacity to support and sustain the OPVs.
- This region has the capacity to become the centre of excellence for operations, maintenance and training for OPVs.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Federal Government has pledged \$120M in this decade and \$300M in the subsequent decade to develop additional wharf space and support infrastructure within HMAS Cairns.

PROJECT COSTS AND TIMELINES

\$420M spend in the decade to 2026.

PROJECT LOCATION

HMAS Cairns - Draper St, Portsmith (within the Cairns Marine Precinct)

CONTACT

CEO@advancecairns.com / 07 4080 2900

Advance Cairns' Infrastructure and Policy Priorities are developed in collaboration with leading regional advocates. They are regularly reviewed and updated.