

Richard Peter Billington

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Vulnerable Supply Chains study team
Productivity Commission
Level 2, 4 National Circuit, Barton
ACT 2600

Research Manager - Marcelo Muñoz

Dear Marcelo and Team,

Re: Vulnerable Supply Chains – 2nd Submission

I have register / subscribed to the call out for contributions to assist in the recognition of vulnerable supply chains across Australia.

In my original submission my focus was on the Canning Industry in Australia and more specifically the absence of any real Canning Capability across Australia.

With this 2nd submission, I have been fortunate to have come in contact with an extremely valuable person who has been researching and writing papers on a vast cross section of Australia's supply chains.

This man, Alistair Pope who resides in Victoria has provided the entire background of research, referencing, writing and compilation. My contribution has been the collation and presentation along with the incorporation my ideas, views and propositions into our submission document that we present as collaboration.

As I pointed out in my previous covering letter to, and my Canning Industry paper, Australia is not just void to a small degree in this area, **but is totally lacking.**

Unfortunately this example is exactly that, an example. It is just the start of the story of inadequate and non-existent manufacturing and supply capabilities in almost every sector in every industry.

We feel our submission titled "**SOVEREIGNTY OF AUSTRALIA**" goes some way in highlighting the massive problems we face as a nation and puts forward realistic and sound ways and means of doing something about.

The most critical thing to be overcome is the apathy and gross misunderstand of the perilous position Australia is in, both by Politian's and the Public.

The masses seem to be totally oblivious to Australia's situation in all areas of supply and security. It seems so long as there is anything other than reality to occupy the

peoples time (minds), all the life and security dangers don't exist or are always someone else's problem to worry about.

This could not be more obvious than it is in Western Australia. Somethings here have not changed in 80 years and still nobody bangs the drum. The public and decades of Governments from both persuasions have just been oblivious to the holes in WA's capabilities and sovereignty, that it is nothing but stupidity on the part of everyone.

Just a brief list of some of the deficient on non-existent areas of infrastructure, supply and security in WA that have not been specifically covered or eluded too in our "**SOVEREIGNTY OF AUSTRALIA**" paper is:

- **No Army** – latest accurate count being 125 Permanent Soldiers, 1185 Reserve Volunteers, 450 SAS Elite Soldiers, giving a grand total of 1760.
There is zero capability with such a limited Permanent Army of 125 soldiers to properly assist in civil emergencies such as evacuations, firefighting, floods, cyclones and the like. There are no transportation vehicles of any number and no bulldozers or any other earth moving or lifting plant in WA, as there is No Permanent RAE Construction Unit here.
The previous 22 Construction Squadron was disbanded back in 1991, and this decision has been rued ever since.
- **No Airforce** - NO planes, NO helicopters, NO operational airstrips as Pearce Airstrip under repair and out of service, Learmonth Airstrip is just a BARE BASE with the last recorded discussion on upgrade being was back in : Development of operational facilities at RAAF Base, Learmonth EXMOUTH Monday, 30 June 1997 OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT
- **No Cannery Industry** – see previous submitted paper
- **Limited Commercial Food Production**
Many products that are not necessarily a staple but never the less are important to be available at most times that have little or no production in WA such as: Ice-cream, Biscuits, Dips, and the like
- **No Clothing Production** – limited or no general clothing and garment production. No protective clothing, safety apparel or footwear production
- **Limited Emergency Equipment** – a structured inventory of all emergency equipment required responding to every type of event and crisis should be properly co-ordinated across the state. WA like all states should have the capability to primarily look after them in the first instance.
- **Medical Ordinance** – there is no Government organised storage and controlled supply of all Pharmaceuticals. It is all left to private companies, which is in my view, is dangerous and is another very critical area that the Federal and State Governments should have a handle on.

Australia has not only got a critical need to Establish or Re-establish a secure source of food but at the same time foster the resurrection of many other forms and areas of manufacturing .

All industries need to be diversified across all states and regional areas, to enable and guarantee supply in a crisis such as a pandemic. Every state must have its own capability in all industries to some degree.

It is very clear that the downfall of Australia's ability to compete has resulted from the blind obedience to the age old mantra of "**let the market place rule**", regardless of the effect on the stability of industry in Australia and more importantly regardless of "**the best interests and security of Australia**"

Australia's cannot afford to continue down this path of allowing "**market forces**" to dictate Manufacturing and Critical Supply because this is the very reason that we now have little to none.

It is in the NATIONAL INTEREST that Australia has all industries alive and well, and **each individual state** and territory has CAPABILITIES to some extent in most industries.

The Federal Government must establish a plan/ means of this being achieved, whether it be based on Government ownership, big business driven or a combination of both, it must be recognised and made a critical priority.

I hope our contribution to this study is of some help to the team and we thank you for the opportunity to be involved.

Yours faithfully,

Richard Peter Billington