

**Letter to the Editor, responding to the reported proposed changes to deployment of the ADF. Sent to Sydney Morning Herald and Canberra Times.  
19 August 2020**

Dear Editor,

The proposed changes by the Coalition Government to the legislation that affects the deployment of the ADF within Australia (as reported by Galloway and Harris, SMH 14.8.20) are alarming. While the legal status of individual members of the ADF in domestic interventions has long been unclear and needs to be addressed, there is too great a readiness to resort to the use of the ADF during domestic crises.

The role of the ADF is to defend Australia from external threats. Domestic crises rarely need military involvement for defence purposes. A more useful approach would be a properly planned, coordinated and resourced structure between the already existing wide range of civilian services – the SES, Fire services, health workers, volunteers etc.

As we have been forewarned, Australia will continue to have longer and more severe natural disasters. While the ADF is held in high regard, militarizing emergencies is something that should be done only in extreme situations. It is time we had a fully developed domestic crisis response capacity. This would leave the ADF free to concentrate on their main task of the defence of Australia.