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# TRANSCRIPT OF PODCAST

## WORK WITH PURPOSE

### EPISODE 8

GREG MORIARTY - Secretary, Department of Defence

GENERAL ANGUS CAMPBELL AO DSC - Chief of the Australian Defence Force

Hosted by DAVID PEMBROKE, Founder and CEO, contentgroup

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DAVID PEMBROKE: Hello, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to, Work with Purpose, a podcast about the Australian Public Service. My name's David Pembroke. Thanks for joining me. Before we begin today, I'd like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on where we meet, the Ngunnawal people, and pay my respects to their continuing culture, and the contribution that the Ngunnawal people make to the life of this city and region.

Today, Studio 19 is once again on the road, and this time to the Canberra suburb of Russell and the home of the Department of Defence. Today, we speak with Greg Moriarty, the Secretary of Defence, and General Angus Campbell, the Chief of the Australian Defence Force. Greg Moriarty is a distinguished Australian public servant. Born in Queensland, Greg has held a number of influential positions in the APS, including ambassador to Iran, ambassador to Indonesia. He was Australia's counter-terrorism coordinator, and he also spent time as chief of staff to the former Australian Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull. Greg Moriarty, welcome to, Work with Purpose.

GREG MORIARTY: Thank you. It's great to have you with us here today.

DAVID PEMBROKE: General Angus Campbell has dedicated his professional career in the service of the Australian people. Aside from a short stint in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, General Campbell has been an Australian Defence Force lifer, since he began at the Royal Military College in Duntroon in 1984. Since then, he has served in a number of roles, both in Australia and around the world, receiving the Distinguished Service Cross for his leadership of the Australian forces in the Middle East, including in Afghanistan. He was appointed Chief of the Australian Defence Force in 2018. General Campbell, welcome to Work with Purpose.

GENERAL CAMPBELL: Thanks very much, David.

DAVID PEMBROKE: So, listen, I'd like to ask the same question of both of you, given that you have dedicated your careers, your professional careers in public service, and perhaps, Greg, to you first, at what stage in your life was it that you thought, "Public service is going to be for me, that's what I'd like to do?"

GREG MORIARTY: David, thank you. It was at the end of my university career and I was thinking about options. I was very interested in defence and security issues, international relations, and I thought that a career in government service in that area would be both rewarding and something that would interest me. So I joined the Australian public service at the age of 21, and I have loved being a public servant, and I've found it an incredibly rewarding career.

DAVID PEMBROKE: What do you love about it?

GREG MORIARTY: I love the range of issues that I've been able to deal with in my career, the diversity. I'm very committed to doing what I can to enhance the security and the prosperity of Australians. I very much enjoyed working on national security challenges, and I've really derived a great deal of satisfaction from serving government, from providing good advice, trying to do my best to implement decisions, to carry out government policy. I genuinely believe in an apolitical service, and doing our best to implement the policies of the government of the day.

DAVID PEMBROKE: And to you, General Campbell. You were from a defence family, but when was it for you that you thought, "Okay, this is how I would like to spend my professional career?"

GENERAL CAMPBELL: From about year 10 onwards at school, I desired to join the military, and in particular, for me, the Army. Following my father's footsteps, and unbeknownst to me that perhaps subtle influence was not so unsubtle, but now I reflect on it and think, well, I wasn't imaginative enough to think of something else to do, but it was a very good choice. It's been a fabulous career, extraordinary people, and great diversity and range of experiences and opportunities, and a constant capacity to serve, and to contribute, and feeling as you're doing it, as part of a team. Very, very, very positive.

DAVID PEMBROKE: But is it that sense of purpose that lies at the heart of it? That every morning you wake up, you think, "Well, I'm having impact. It's got real meaning in my life?"

GENERAL CAMPBELL: I think so. You are serving your nation, and that's a great thing to do, and it's very rewarding. So I've thoroughly enjoyed it, and I would recommend it to anyone.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Now, listen, before we do start to talk about COVID, I think it has been quite an extraordinary year for the Australian public service, and an extraordinary year for both of you, particularly with the bush fires, which created really quite an unprecedented, in many ways, involvement of the Defence Force into the lives of Australians. And I think for many of us, it was visible, it was prominent, it was important. I'd like to perhaps start with you, Greg, and take us back to that time about how you started to make those decisions about involving the Defence Force in the response to the bush fires?

GREG MORIARTY: Well, thank you, David. It's a very good question, because we actually thought of this last year, and of course the Australian Defence Force has always been involved with civil authorities, and in providing humanitarian and disaster relief. It's got an absolutely fantastic reputation for making those contributions, domestically and internationally.

But last year we were thinking about these issues and General Campbell spoke to the Minister, as well, about what we might be able to do, gradually, to mobilise the Australian Defence Force, and uniquely, to look more deliberately at what we could do to mobilise reserves, and General Campbell, with the Minister and the broader government's approval, put in place a plan to have a limited call out of the reserves.

So there was a lot of thinking going on early, but as it turned out that mobilisation turned out to be more consequential, larger scale, and for longer than we anticipated, but I really do commend the ADF for doing that thinking, and we as a department worked to realise it. So although the ADF was heavily involved, defence civilians, and our industry partners really responded magnificently through that period. And we were able to provide, I think, a really strong support for devastated and impacted Australian communities, but a lot of the planning was done in advance of the bush fire season. And I think the government gave us direction to get on and prepare for that, and the department and the ADF were well-placed to respond. The scale was much more significant than we thought we might ever have to deal with, but all credit to a number of people who are involved in that.

DAVID PEMBROKE: So, General Campbell, that's interesting that you were thinking about this and you were preparing for this. What made you think that this was something that the ADF needed to perhaps give more priority to than it had in the past?

GENERAL CAMPBELL: David, the Australian Defence Force has both the full-time personnel and a large number, many thousands of part time or reserve personnel. And over a number of years, we have been strengthening the integrated effect of bringing both of those work types together, to create a larger Defence Force, and with the members of the Australian public service, so the Department of Defence, a larger defence enterprise. We wanted to test and learn from a model call out activity, undertaken only by a small, indicative group of perhaps around 30 reservists, so that we could ensure we had a mechanism available, if an emergency were to arise, where we needed a large number of people at very short notice.

And I don't think any of us particularly thought, two months later, that that would be the time, but it does show the value of planning, and being open to considering the range of contingent possibilities in that planning.

DAVID PEMBROKE: So there was an actual operator with 30 people, so you did it. What was the scenario that you were planning for?

GENERAL CAMPBELL: So, early in November, we contributed that small number of reserve personnel, formally called out through a process that the Governor General enacts, and they were deployed to assist in areas in Queensland, which were affected at that time by bush fires, not necessarily of the scale that we saw later, elsewhere in the country, but nevertheless, an appropriate response to call out, to concentrate, to deploy, to employ, and then return back to their civilian circumstances, homes, and employment.

And in doing that, we learned all of the rub points, administratively, of getting, in bulk, people into full time service, and then being able to employ them appropriately. Very useful in what turned out to be a call for what became approximately 3000 reserve personnel. Some were volunteers, but the greater majority were called out. And that was in the early January period. They were called out for approximately 28 days. And it was in that critical point for the support of south-eastern Australia. We couldn't have done what we did without that number of people. And in particular, that number of people coming, in large measure, from the communities or the near communities that were affected.

Very positive, and they were integrated with full time personnel. So you got the true strength of a total force effort. I visited many of them. They were incredibly enthusiastic and very proud to serve, and I'm deeply appreciative of what they did.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Yeah. You certainly got that sense that there was that real enthusiasm from the Defence Force, to get involved, probably no surprise, really, to be able to serve at a time of crisis in their own country.

GENERAL CAMPBELL: Yes, indeed. I mentioned about 3000 reservists, and another three and a half thousand full time personnel across Navy, Army and Air Force, all working for common purpose, and all working to help Australians in Australia. Very strong, positive sense of focus, purpose, and determination to do the best they could. And all over the country, there were affected families and communities, who would stop and say something just to acknowledge the military personnel who had been helping them. Someone fixing a fence, someone who'd fixed a water generator to make sure the cattle had some water, people who were restocking shelves. No matter what it was, there was a Defence Force member working with state and territory emergency services, trying to assist.

Now, we were always in support. We were not fighting the fires, so we're the second layer of effort. And I think all strength in regard to our bush firefighters, who did a magnificent job, but it was something that I think the Defence Force was really pleased to be involved with, to be able to help, and Australia needed that help.

DAVID PEMBROKE: So, Greg, how has it changed the Defence Force in your view, that involvement, at that scale, of the Defence Force in the bush fires?

GREG MORIARTY: Well, it's had a very significant impact on the broad defence enterprise, the Australian Defence Force, our defence public servants and our contractors, and we've learned to work differently. The idea of quick mobilisation, the idea of being able to respond flexibly, using our bases differently, that, as General Campbell said, the use of reservists, being able to do that, being more agile about those response mechanisms. It's also making us think more about what type of equipment and stores and provisioning we might need in advance of the next bush fire season, but also thinking about what we might need to do in the region, in our region, to be able to support our friends and partners. If there are regional contingencies, how we can adjust our doctrine, our processes, and have the skills to be able to deal with that.

So we're thinking about the lessons learned from the bush fires, but also the lessons that we're learning from COVID-19 Assist, in terms of how we work differently in future. And we are of the view, and I think government has said, defence will need to think and be available for these types of contingencies, more in future, and that internal work is being undertaken.

DAVID PEMBROKE: So, General Campbell, has it had an impact on the morale within the Defence Force? Is there that sense of pride that has come from the involvement of the Defence Force in?

GENERAL CAMPBELL: I think definitely. And a real sense that it's a tangible acknowledgment of assistance to Australians, immediate present, and proud to be part of. I think that we started very quickly in 2020, and we had been assisting the bush fires through September, October, November into December and progressively, from a small level, building. But in early January, when we went from about a thousand to six and a half thousand, the Defence Force's full energies turned to that issue. And I think they are rightly proud of being able to make that contribution. And I want to emphasise it again, it's a contribution that is in support of our firefighters.

DAVID PEMBROKE: So, to COVID-19, and to that time, as it was starting to build, take me through what happened here at defence, as you were starting to see the advice, see the cables, see things happening, what happened? Or, when did you start to think, "Okay, this is going to be something that we're really going to have to activate a response to?"

GREG MORIARTY: I think we were very much involved right, from the start, in the whole of government effort, and the mechanisms that the government stood up, the national coordination mechanism, which was run out of Home Affairs with a strong Emergency Management Australia element, the broader contribution to the COVID-19, the whole of government processes around the National Security Committee of Cabinet, which we supported. The Prime Minister was also involved, and set up these cabinet office policy committees to discuss the particular dimensions, and we were very much involved in one of those lines of effort.

And then we were also heavily involved, through the Chief Operating Officers Committee, into the whole of government. Both General Campbell and I supported Secretary Gaetjens, the Head of Prime Minister and Cabinet, with the work that he was doing. So we were very much involved from the outset, wanting to be part of that whole of government effort. These challenges do require a whole of government response, and defence needs to find its appropriate place in that. And I think there's many lessons for us for the future, but that whole of government coordination, and making sure that defence is joined up, that we are leaning into support other departments, but also part of the information sharing, I think, is really important, both for the Australian Defence Force and our defence civilian workforce.

DAVID PEMBROKE: So, General Campbell, when you're in those meetings, what are you expected to contribute? When they're asking you, General Campbell, what are they expecting you to come up with?

GENERAL CAMPBELL: My attitude is very much that the Defence Force is an instrument of government, to serve Australia in its national interests. And so whatever we have, that could be useful, is available. And it's always going to be available. The question to then step through is, where can we target the most useful elements of a defence capability, that's military and civil, working with police, working across the levels of the federal government, and the states and territories government, with medical organisations, with border force and so forth.

So we saw, early on, military and civil planning teams being deployed across the Commonwealth government, and also to state and territory governments. We saw an augmentation of border force and police capability, so that whether it might have been either quarantine checks or contact tracing, or simply support to back room administration and planning, a greater and more sustainable capability of those frontline agencies could be maintained.

We've worked now across all the state and territory governments, a range of agencies, our military medical capability linked in, where appropriate, to states and territories, as well as engaging across foreign affairs and trade with partners in our region, to see how, as a community of nations, we can help each other, we can inform each other, we can learn from each other. I think it's been another step when your country is completely challenged by a virus, so it's not geographically contained with regard to a bush fire or a cyclone, but it's theoretically the entire country. You need everything turned on, and everything made available and willing to be flexible and adapt to whatever is needed. And that's what we've tried to do across the enterprise.

DAVID PEMBROKE: But it sounds like you've been involved, really, then, in everything-

GENERAL CAMPBELL: Pretty much, yes.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Almost across the board?

GENERAL CAMPBELL: I think defence wants to make its contribution and to be of assistance to others. And that's our attitude. "How can we help?" And that's the way we've taken forward.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Because we have seen, Northern Tasmania, obviously the defence department paid a very big role in that. But then, I was reading one of the defence magazines the other day, and saw people in call centres, project managers. So it's really opening up the enterprise and saying, "Look, come in, this is what we've got. If you need any of this, we're ready to help."

GREG MORIARTY: David, there's been a couple of really interesting and unique contributions. Making face masks is-

DAVID PEMBROKE: Yeah, that was a good story.

GREG MORIARTY: We've also had our scientists helping to design face shields for healthcare workers, our defence science and technology group. Some absolutely world-class skills there, but they've been able to turn their skills to helping with those face masks. We've also had a rapid response group to help build the number of ventilators that we have in this country, and working with private sector to be able to get a desperate shortage, initially, of ventilators. So we've been able to use our defence scientists to use their skills to do that. So, incredibly rewarding work for them.

And Australian public servants, including many of our graduates, who've offered to help at Services Australia, to respond to calls from Australians who are really suffering from the circumstances that they find themselves in. We've been very pleased. We've had around about 200 public servants at any given time with Services Australia, answering calls, all the way from graduates to senior executives. And they've really enjoyed that different type of public service, so in addition to our ADF colleagues, Australian public servants have been able to make a real contribution during this crisis.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Well, I'm interested. How do you two work together? How does that all come to pass?

GENERAL CAMPBELL: Closely and constantly.

DAVID PEMBROKE: You spend more time with each other than your spouses, I imagine.

GREG MORIARTY: Absolutely.

GENERAL CAMPBELL: David, as it happens to turn out, our spouses are overseas in their own professional lives. So we definitely spend more time together.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Oh, all right. But how do you work together?

GREG MORIARTY: Well, the unique arrangement that we have in Australia for the diarchy, I think it works well in the circumstances. We try to build a single defence enterprise with an integrated workforce, obviously the Australian Defence Force, and General Campbell is the commander of that Defence Force, have unique responsibilities about the lawful employment of coercive force, and of lethal force if circumstances require, at the lawful direction of the government of the day. But there are many aspects of the enterprise, in terms of policy, in terms of those issues, about the development of capabilities, the development of skillsets, policy support to the government, intelligence. These are areas where Australian public servants and members of the Australian Defence Force work together, to generate a better outcome for Australia. I think when a diverse workforce, that has skillsets, gender diversity, ethnic diversity, comes from all aspects of that great Australian community, and that the combination of the Australian public service and the Australian Defence Force, it makes us a more capable organisation. And I think it gives better options to government, and a better quality defence effort to contribute to Australian statecraft.

DAVID PEMBROKE: General Campbell, perhaps I'll ask that question in a different way. When your mobile phone rings, and it's Greg Moriarty, how do you feel?

GENERAL CAMPBELL: Happy to receive the call. Always. [crosstalk 00:25:01]

DAVID PEMBROKE: Is it good news, or is it like, "Oh, my God?"

GENERAL CAMPBELL: Greg and I share with each other, both the best of news and on occasions, that disappointing news that reminds you, it's an organisation of about a hundred thousand people. And they're trying to do their best every day, but sometimes things don't quite go to plan. I'm very much of the views that Greg offered, the diarchy is the right and best way to give our government the best defence capability that can be realised, because it integrates all of the perspectives, and facets, and interests of a very large, very dispersed, very capable organisation, into one stream of advice, and then execution.

DAVID PEMBROKE: One of the features of this podcast is we actually get questions from future leaders, from the APS, and I have a couple of questions for you today. And the first of those is from Amy Burgess, from the Attorney General's Department. And she asks, of both of you, "The nature of your roles in defence means that you're both experienced at dealing with crisis. How has the pandemic crisis differed from those that have come before?" General Campbell? To you first.

GENERAL CAMPBELL: I would first start by saying, it is a crisis that has affected the totality of the nation, and that is quite unique. It doesn't mean, necessarily, that you approach it differently, but the scale and the completeness of the response can be orders of magnitude greater than other circumstances, short of a catastrophic conflict or some such thing. Every single person in Australia is affected by this COVID-19 pandemic. Every single person in Australia will feel the economic challenges that we'll all have to work together to deal with as the nation moves out of this pandemic. And we'll all have to, for some time, be disciplined in the way we approach the relaxation of social distancing measures, because until a vaccine is developed, if it is developed, we've got to keep the mindset that we're all in this together, and we can all get out of this together.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Greg, your response to that question?



GREG MORIARTY: Well, it has impacted our workforce as well as the broader community. So we're responding to the crisis with also the need to manage our own workforce, their health and safety, the stresses it imposes on them and their families, as well as the broader community. It's had a very strong domestic dimension, but we are also thinking and doing the contingency planning for the region, and what the Australian government may need to do to support our friends and partners in the region. So it's got an international dimension, as well as that huge domestic dimension, whole of government coordination has been vital, working with, all the amount of work that we've done with the Health Department in recent months, the amount of work that we've done with Home Affairs, unprecedented, and also with the states and territories. So it's required us to really think about whole of government engagement, leaning in to support other organisations in a very different way.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Another question from Kylie Highly, from the Australian Public Service Commission, and she asks, "What learnings have you taken from current world events, that you think will assist in future decision-making for defence, and the public sector more generally?" Greg I'll throw that to you to start.

GREG MORIARTY: We are very interested in taking the learnings from the COVID-19 response for bouncing back better, in terms of what have we learned about doing things remotely, that we might be able to take on as an enduring business practise in defence. Our relationship with our defence partners has also become, I think, more intimate, as we've needed to rely on them to keep defence capability, and they have been very grateful for the support, that defence has been able to continue to support Australian defence industry in this very difficult time.

Working from home arrangements have, I think been quite successful, we're trying to think, what does that mean for the future of how we might work? How do we support ministers when they are remote from us? When we don't have those regular, every few days or at least weekly, face to face meetings?

And I also think we're thinking about what the implications and the impacts of this on gender issues in our workforce, because women are impacted and have, I think, been impacted differently than men, in particularly in the working from home arrangements. And we just need to be conscious of that, and think about it in terms of our personnel policies.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Okay. General Campbell?

GENERAL CAMPBELL: I just reflect that 10 years ago, the ease of communication in teleconferencing and video conferencing that we're now experiencing, wouldn't have been possible. And I have been surprised, pleasantly, at how consistently and effectively our communication systems across the Commonwealth, and the variety of systems, are working for us. And that's got to be something that we take and use into the future. It gives us all more time, and more flexibility in the way we work together, whether it's from home, whether it's a face to face, or whether it's through some intermediary system, like a video conferencing system.

DAVID PEMBROKE: All right, well, listen, we are hard up against time. And so, General Angus Campbell, and Greg Moriarty, thank you both for your service, and thank you both for coming on, Work with Purpose today.

GREG MORIARTY: Thank you.

GENERAL CAMPBELL: Thanks very much.

DAVID PEMBROKE: And to you, the audience, thank you for coming back once again. We certainly appreciate your ongoing support as we speak to the leadership of the Australian Public Services. They explain to you just exactly how the APS is responding, and the ADF, in this case is responding to such a great challenge, and a great discussion today.

So thanks also to our friends and colleagues at IPA, and the Australian Public Service Commission, for their ongoing support for this podcast series. Work with Purpose is part of the GovComms Podcast Network. And if you would like to check out the GovComms Podcast, please type that into your favourite podcast browser, and it is sure to come up. If you do happen to come across our social media promotion for the programme, please pass it along so people can hear the discussions that we have been having over the last few weeks. So, thank you very much for that support.

We will be back next week with another double header, this time with the Commissioner of the Australian Border Force, Michael Outram, and the Commissioner of the Australian Federal Police, Reece Kershaw. So, that promises to be another fascinating conversation. So thanks again for your time and for the moment, enjoy your week, but it's time to say goodbye. So, bye for now.

SPEAKER 4: Work with Purpose is a production of Content Group, in partnership with the Institute of Public Administration Australia, and with the support of the Australian Public Service Commission.