



CENTRAL QUEENSLAND

# Central to Defence

GLADSTONE

LIVINGSTONE

ROCKHAMPTON

Central Queensland (CQ) which includes the Rockhampton Region, Gladstone Region, Livingstone Shire and Shoalwater Bay Training Area (SWBTA) is uniquely positioned to contribute to the strategic objectives and transformation of the Australia Defence Force (ADF).

A diverse region with a proud and successful history of manufacturing and construction, the three most populous local governments in CQ are presenting a united front and highlighting the untapped opportunities for Defence manufacturing, logistics and training at the gateway to Northern Australia.

With its strategic geographic location, deep-water ports, versatile airports, and world-class military training facilities, the region offers significant advantages for force projection, sustainment, and resilience as well as ample supply chain opportunities for the Defence industry.

## Why is Central Queensland the ideal partner to Defence and the Defence Industry?

- I Gateway to Northern Australia with direct connectivity to Brisbane and other key regional cities
- II Easy access to international markets via the Port of Gladstone, Port of Rockhampton and the international-standard Rockhampton Airport
- III Existing infrastructure, unified regional economy, strong investment and project pipeline, skilled workforce and ongoing expansion and growth.
- IV Attractive location for skilled domestic and international workforce migration due to a lower cost of living, enviable lifestyle, established education and training institutions, and industrial diversity from manufacturing through to retail and beyond

**CENTRAL QUEENSLAND IS A FUTURE STRATEGIC HUB FOR AUSTRALIA'S DEFENCE INDUSTRY**

Area

28,500KM<sup>2</sup>

Population

190,000

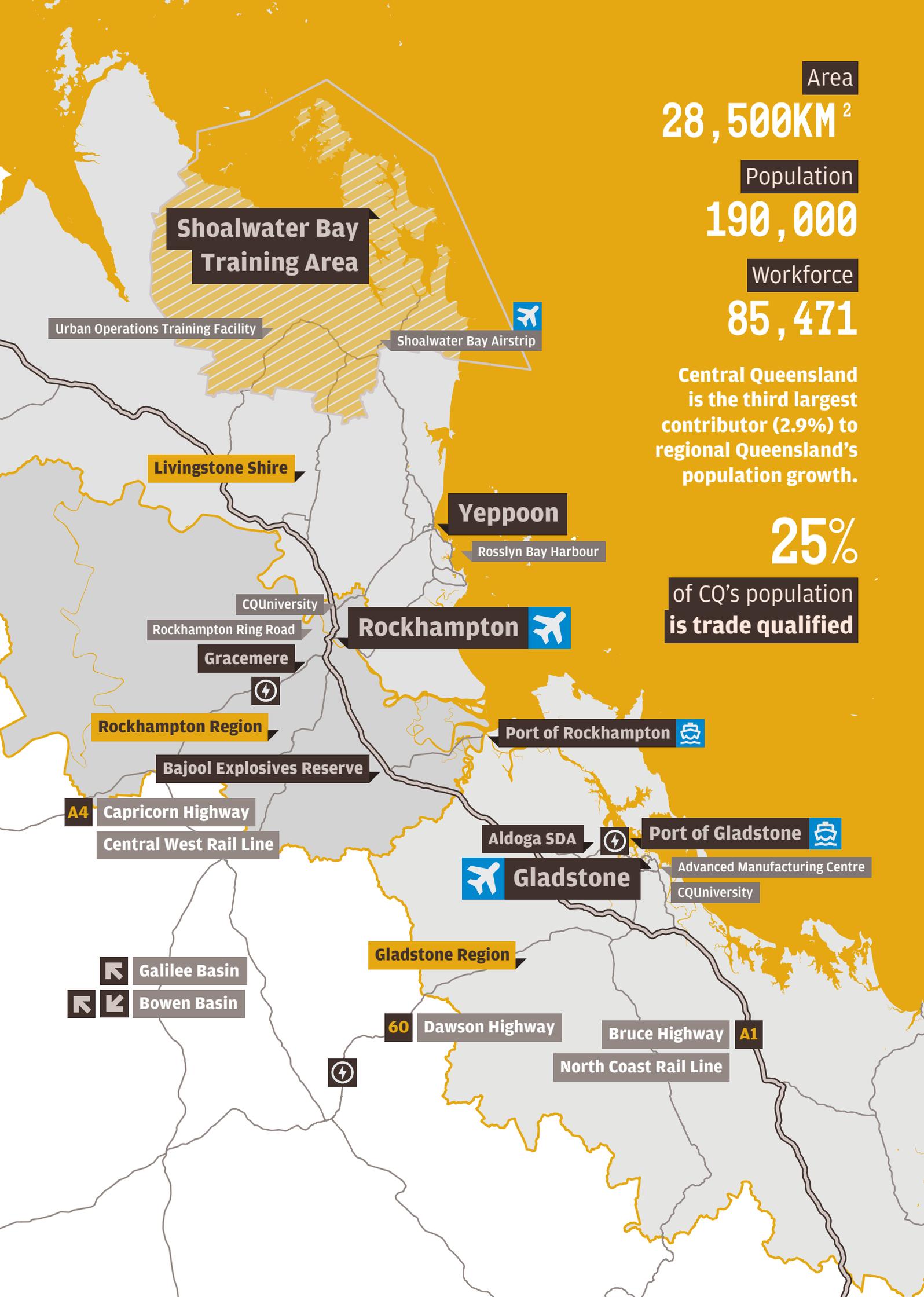
Workforce

85,471

Central Queensland is the third largest contributor (2.9%) to regional Queensland's population growth.

25%

of CQ's population is trade qualified



Shoalwater Bay Training Area

Urban Operations Training Facility

Shoalwater Bay Airstrip

Livingstone Shire

Yeppoon

Roslyn Bay Harbour

CQUniversity

Rockhampton Ring Road

Rockhampton

Gracemere

Rockhampton Region

Port of Rockhampton

Bajool Explosives Reserve

A4 Capricorn Highway

Central West Rail Line

Aldoga SDA

Port of Gladstone

Advanced Manufacturing Centre  
CQUniversity

Gladstone

Gladstone Region

Galilee Basin

Bowen Basin

60 Dawson Highway

Bruce Highway A1

North Coast Rail Line



## Shoalwater Bay Training Area

**AUSTRALIA'S PREMIER, MULTINATIONAL DEFENCE TRAINING AREA.**

Located 80 kilometres north of Rockhampton and accessible via sea, air and land, SWBTA is a key asset for integrated littoral operations with significant opportunity to scale.



## Port of Gladstone

**QUEENSLAND'S LARGEST DEEP-WATER AND MULTI-COMMODITY PORT.**

With its deep dual shipping lanes and significant capacity for expansion, eastern Australia's only 100% Australian owned port has untapped potential for national and allied forces' naval operations as well as land and littoral logistics and support.



## Explosive Ordnance Logistics

**CRITICAL ASSETS IN AUSTRALIA'S EXPLOSIVES LOGISTICS SUPPLY CHAIN.**

The Port of Rockhampton is a natural deep-water, Class 1 Explosives capable port, located 60km from Rockhampton with a dedicated road transport corridor for specialised cargo.



## Rockhampton Airport

**INTERNATIONAL STANDARD RUNWAY WITH HEAVY LIFT CAPABILITY AND AIRCRAFT DEEP MAINTENANCE, REPAIR AND OVERHAUL (MRO) FACILITY.**

Third longest runway in Queensland, workforce experienced in handling military aircraft and owned and operated by Rockhampton Regional Council.

# Growth Enablers

## Infrastructure capacity

**EXTENSIVE AND CRITICAL ROAD, RAIL, SEA AND AIR INFRASTRUCTURE READY TO SUPPORT DEFENCE CAPABILITY UPLIFT AND EXPANSION**

- I Key Defence assets with potential for expansion: Port of Rockhampton (Port Alma) and Bajool Explosives Reserve, Port of Gladstone, Rockhampton Airport and SWBTA.
- II Secure, reliable and affordable power supply through proximity to three existing power stations at Stanwell, Gladstone and Callide, and future planned Renewable Energy Zones.
- III \$1.73 billion investment by the State and Federal governments into the Rockhampton Ring Road to improve connectivity and improve flood mitigation.

## Investment

**EXTENSIVE MULTI-BILLION DOLLAR PROJECT PIPELINE ACROSS THE REGION IN INFRASTRUCTURE, ENERGY, MINING, AGRIBUSINESS AND MANUFACTURING**

- I \$13 billion project pipeline to be delivered in the Rockhampton Region within the next four years.
- II The recent expansion of the SWBTA will contribute up to \$600 million into the regional economy by 2028.

## Skilled workforce

**SKILLED WORKFORCE WITH STRONG TRANSFERABLE SKILLS FROM MINING, RESOURCES, AGRIBUSINESS AND MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES AND HIGH-QUALITY TERTIARY EDUCATION FACILITIES INCLUDING CQUNIVERSITY**

- I 25% of the region's population holds a trade qualification which is 6% higher than the national average.
- II CQUniversity's main and largest campus is based in Rockhampton with a further and recently expanded campus at the Gladstone Marina.
- III CQUniversity is Queensland's only dual-sector university, offering higher education and vocational training presenting enhanced research and manufacturing opportunities.
- IV Alliance Airlines maintenance facility at Rockhampton Airport delivers a range of apprenticeships relating to aircraft deep-maintenance.

## Connectivity

**STRATEGIC LOCATION - GATEWAY TO NORTHERN AUSTRALIA WITH STRONG CONNECTIVITY VIA ROAD, RAIL, AIR AND SEA TO MAJOR CITIES ACROSS QUEENSLAND AND AUSTRALIA**

- I Rockhampton Airport has defence-ready heavy lift, maintenance, repair and overhaul capabilities.
- II Extensive rail network connecting the region to Far North Queensland, inland Queensland and South East Queensland as well as major export ports including the Port of Gladstone.

## Competitive operating costs

**COMPETITIVE OPERATING COSTS DRIVEN BY A COMPARATIVELY LOWER COST OF LIVING, AND ABUNDANCE OF AFFORDABLE LAND**

- I Rockhampton is one of the most affordable regions along the eastern seaboard of Australia with rent and mortgages lower than state and national averages.
- II Lower cost of operating for ADF, and lower cost of living for its personnel.

## Growth capacity

**GROWTH CAPACITY AT EXISTING DEFENCE-READY SITES AND SUBSTANTIAL AVAILABILITY OF WELL-CONNECTED INDUSTRIAL LAND**

- I Available land at existing sites to enable expansion of defence presence and capabilities including at SWBTA, Bajool Explosives Reserve, Port of Gladstone and Rockhampton Airport.
- II Availability of industrial land across all three Councils, including 27,000 hectares in the Gladstone State Development Area and continual infrastructure and connectivity improvements to industrial precincts across the Rockhampton Region.



CQ presents a unique value proposition to the ADF and Defence industry to expand their current footprint and capabilities and establish a strong and leading Defence industry which leverages existing infrastructure, supply chains and skilled workforce.

## KEY STRATEGIC ALIGNMENTS

# with Defence

# 01

**Sovereign Industrial & Supply Chain Resilience**

# 03

**Workforce & Defence Industry Growth**

# 02

**Allied Force Reception & Integration**

# 04

**Infrastructure & Logistics Support for Defence**

This alignment with the **National Defence Strategy (NDS) 2024** and the revised **Integrated Investment Program 2024 (IIP)** highlights the region's essential role in strengthening Australia's Defence readiness and capability development while positioning it for future strategic growth.



## SPECIFIC OPPORTUNITIES

# for Defence

## Geographic and operational advantages for Littoral Operations

CQ is exceptionally well-suited for military training and operational activities focused on littoral operations.

## SWBTA

A key asset for integrated littoral operations, featuring diverse terrains which include coastal, maritime, and inland environments. Its proximity to major transport and logistics hubs in Rockhampton and Gladstone enhances its strategic importance. Under the Australia-Singapore Military Training Initiative (ASMTI), the SWBTA has undergone significant expansion and modernisation, including the construction of advanced simulation facilities, upgraded amphibious landing zones, and improved live-fire ranges. These enhancements support joint exercises that closely replicate complex littoral scenarios, demonstrating the region's commitment to improving the readiness and interoperability of the ADF and allied forces.

The revised IIP stresses the need for advanced training facilities to develop capabilities in amphibious warfare, rapid deployment, and integrated joint-force operations. CQ's unique geographic features and purpose-built infrastructure make it an ideal location for these critical training facilities. The region's coastal waters provide an excellent setting for naval and amphibious manoeuvres, while its inland ranges support joint-force integration between the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

## Capability Requirements for Integrated Littoral Operations

The NDS 2024 outlines a tri-service approach to integrated littoral operations, focusing on essential capabilities:



### Army

Emphasis on amphibious and rapid-response capabilities aligns well with SWBTA's facilities, supporting comprehensive amphibious training, including vehicle deployment and logistics coordination.



### Navy

CQ's access to the State Government owned deep-water port in Gladstone could meet the Navy's planned expansion following the Enhanced Lethality Surface Combatant Fleet Review. CQ's proximity to Northern Australia would reduce transit time to likely areas of operation for these vessels.



### Air Force

The region's airports and open airspace support Air Force operations, including aerial reconnaissance, airlift capabilities and international freight and personnel operations. The accessibility of training facilities enhances integration with Army and Navy units during exercises.

# INDUSTRIAL SUPPORT

## for Defence Capabilities

CQ's existing industries provide a strong foundation for a growing Defence presence. The revised IIP emphasises the need to leverage local infrastructure, skilled workforces, and industrial capacity to strengthen Australia's Defence industry base and sovereign capabilities. Key contributions from the region include:

### Infrastructure

Gladstone's deep-water port offers logistical advantages for Defence operations, including the deployment of naval vessels and heavy equipment. It has served as a site for Defence training exercises, highlighting its strategic importance. Enhancing the port's capacity will accommodate larger naval vessels and improve loading systems.

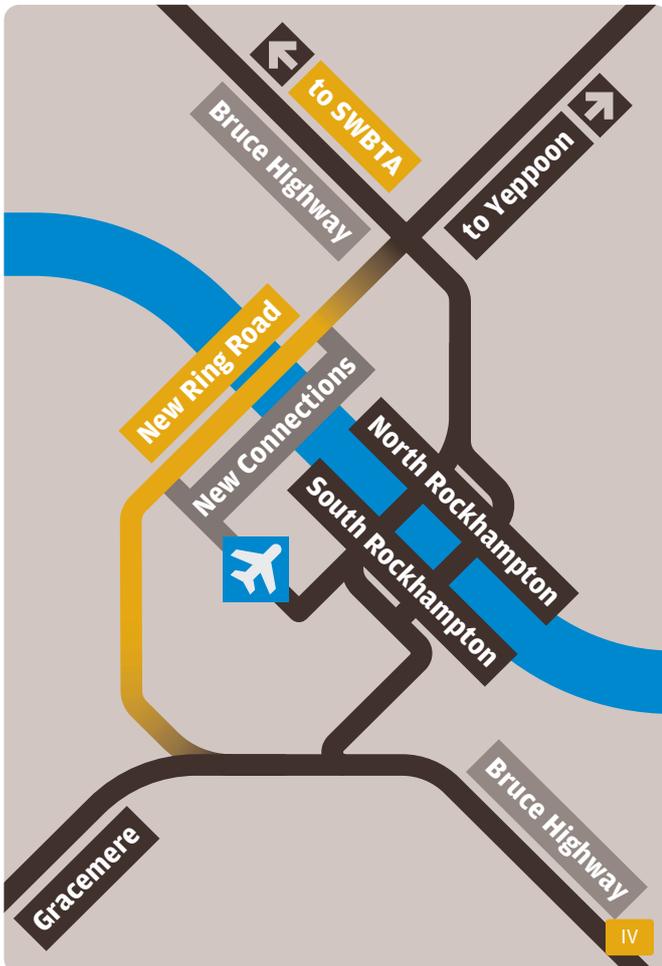
Together with the Port of Rockhampton (Port Alma), the Bajool Explosives Reserve, SWBTA, Rockhampton Airport and the suite of other transport, energy and critical infrastructure, the region's existing assets can be further utilised and expanded to enhance Australia's Defence capabilities and industry.

### Industrial Capacity

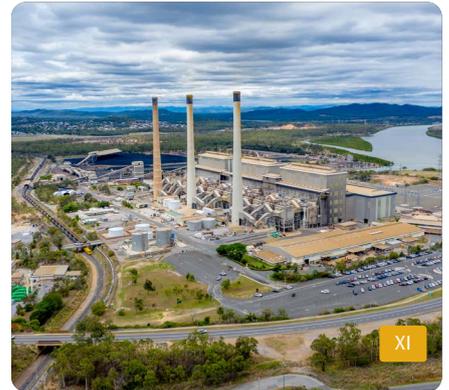
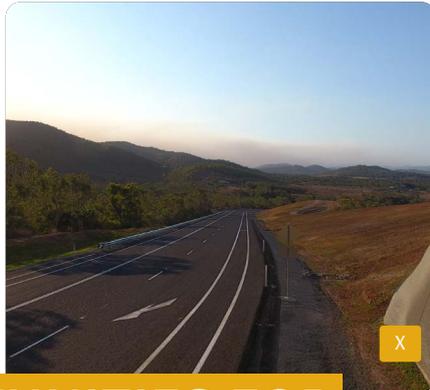
CQ's industrial base aligns with Defence's maintenance and supply chain resilience needs, particularly in heavy industries including manufacturing, engineering, and energy production and maintenance.

The mining and resources sector provides essential materials for Defence manufacturing and construction projects and are supported by numerous plant and equipment hire and mechanical maintenance businesses.

The region's current industrial offerings are supported by an experienced and talented workforce with transferable skills from the mining, resources, construction, agriculture and manufacturing sectors.



- I Gladstone Marina and ship-loading facilities
- II Rosslyn Bay Harbour
- III Stanwell Power Plant
- IV Rockhampton's \$1.7B Ring Road project
- V Defence Exercise Diamond Run 2024 utilising industrial spaces in Rockhampton
- VI Queensland Alumina Limited heavy industry operations in Gladstone
- VII Mining vehicle maintenance in Rockhampton
- VIII Double fuel tanker utilising Gracemere Industrial Area
- IX Remote vehicle operation opportunities in the region
- X New transport and road infrastructure in Livingstone Shire
- XI Gladstone Power Station
- XII Alliance Airlines aircraft deep maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) facility at Rockhampton Airport



## SPECIFIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR

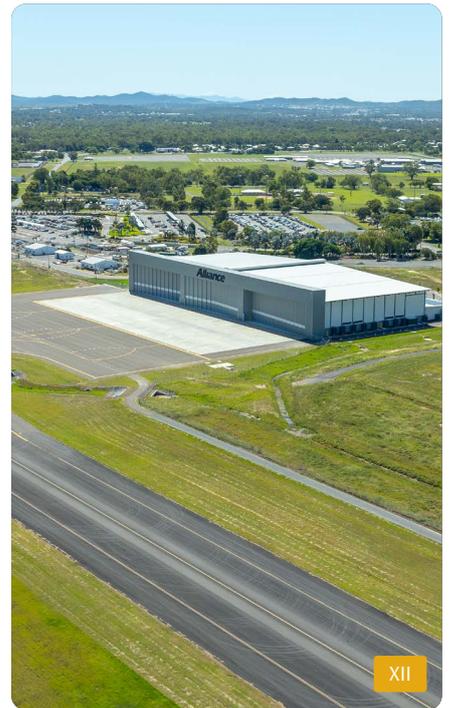
# Defence Industry

CQ is a low-risk, high-reward investment opportunity for discerning Defence industry stakeholders. The region's industrial strength, skilled workforce, ample industrial land and strategic positioning combine to create an unparalleled environment for manufacturing, sustainment, and pioneering innovation in support of the ADF and its allies.

CQ has opportunities for the Defence industry to strengthen its existing industrial capabilities and supply chains across:

- Aircraft deep maintenance
- Land vehicle deep maintenance
- National fuel storage
- Robotics technology and remote vehicle operation
- Munitions manufacturing and storage

CQ has a strong pipeline of projects expected to be delivered over the next five years across the energy, food and agribusiness, mining, infrastructure and resources industries exceeding \$13B. These industries have experienced the benefits and competitive advantage of investing in the region and are continuing to expand and strengthen. We strongly encourage the defence industry to review these opportunities and utilise the region's potential to also strengthen Australia's defence industry.



## Securing Australia's future through regional investment

As Australia implements its largest-ever Defence investment plan, CQ stands ready to play a vital role in strengthening national security, regional deterrence, and Defence preparedness. Investing in the region's infrastructure, workforce, and industrial capacity aligns with the Australian Government's strategic vision of ensuring the ADF remains lethal, agile, and sustainable in the face of evolving threats.

We encourage further engagement with industry leaders, Defence planners, and regional stakeholders to maximise CQ's strategic potential in the future force structure. By leveraging existing assets and targeted investment, CQ stands ready to deliver the operational reach, resilience, and capability that Australia's Defence strategy demands.



# Who is **Central to Defence?**

The Central to Defence Working Group (CTDWG) has been established to advocate and promote the strategic opportunities the CQ region presents to Defence and the Defence industry for expansion and capability uplift, aligned to the NDS.

The CTDWG is a partnership of three local governments (Rockhampton Regional Council, Gladstone Regional Council and Livingstone Shire Council) and Regional Development Australia (RDA).

Together, we form the economic core of the CQ Region which is one of regional Queensland's largest contributors to population growth. Our region is home to over 193,000 residents and a workforce of over 84,000 people, covering an area of over 28,500 square kilometres.

We have a strong pipeline of projects expected to be delivered over the next five years across the across the energy, food and agribusiness, mining, infrastructure and resources industries exceeding \$13 billion.

These sectors have experienced first-hand, the opportunities and competitive advantage of operating in our Region and are continuing to invest and grow. We strongly encourage Defence and the defence industry to review these opportunities and unlock our Region's potential to enhance Australia's Defence capabilities and industry.

## Talk to us

 An Australian Government Initiative



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