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manufacturers on all three types of solution—air superiority, multi-role or specialised—and also departs from previous practice in that it requires rigorous specification of aircraft per-formance to be included at this early stage.
The Government's attitude to local industry participation in the TFF, as well as in other programmes, shows another important departure from past practice. At least half the defence Department announcement of the RFP release is devoted to detailing the importance attached to the future role of the Australian industry. As well as the TFF, some 100 trainers are required to replace the present MB.326s and about 30 transports are needed to take over from the RAAF's Caribous and C47s.

All three new types are due to enter service in the early 1980s and the prospect of a massive rise in work-load and injection of technology has brought varied reactions from major manufacturers Commonwealth Air-craft Corporation, State-owned Gov-ernment Aircraft Factories and Hawker Siddeley subsidiary Hawker de Havilland. The recent 17-5 per cent devaluation of the Australian dollar, despite the small subsequent revaluation, can only have made local offset more attractive in principle although it adds to the total procure-ment cost.

Current estimates suggest that, even if 20 per cent offset on the TFF were obtained, the devaluation would add at least 12 per cent to the programme cost. On the other hand, Australian manufacturers were able overnight to lower their potential off-set bids by more than ten per cent. Hawker de Havilland claims that
in certain areas of manufacturing

Australian industry can prove eco-nomic and internationally competi-tive; The company says that over the past eight years it has won more than $A30 million in contracts from US and European aerospace com-panies as against GAF's $A8 million and CAC's $A7 million.
"The TFF contenders." says HdH, "incorporate the most advanced manufacturing technologies and the opportunity to utilise these on large-volume AIP (Australian Industry Participation) packages, thereby act-ing as a catalyst in upgrading the technology of the increasingly obsoles-cent Australian industry to match overseas performance." The HdH study lists the technologies lacking in Australia which could be required for TFF offset as large-scale numerically controlled machining; metal and honeycomb bonding; boron/graphite/ Devlar composities; titanium fabrica-tion; and chemical milling.
GAF manager Mr H. Dolphin echoes HdH's call for Government initiative in making the most of local industry and particularly in upgrad-ing technology which could be used outside the TFF programme.

More cautious
But Commonwealth Aircraft Cor-poration is more cautious, preferring to concentrate on costing of the operation. The CAC study concludes that high labour costs often prevent local industry from competing in defence work and call for an increase in the traditional reliance on Govern-ment subsidies. Over the past 30 years, cost-plus manufacturing has dominated Government-placed air-craft contracts. It proposes that the Government should "press for a higher percentage than the ten per cent offset value that has been obtained so far in past contracts, regardless of Australian costs."
Other points from the recent defence white paper include:
• The 12 Lockheed P-2 Neptunes will

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be phased out by 1978, when deliver-ies of the ten P-3Cs begin.

• The reconnaissance equipment planned for four of the 24 F-lllCs will be
fitted by 1980. Electro-optical missiles and bombs, and stand-off air-launched missiles, are also planned for the F-lllCs, as well as new target-designa-tion systems and electronic counter-
measures.

• A further limited acquisition of
anti-ship missiles—almost certainly Harpoon, already to arm the new guided-missile frigates (FFGs)—is being considered for destroyers, sub-marines and the P-3Cs.

• The new FFGs will each carry two
helicopters for reconnaissance and attack. An extensive refit programme is being undertaken for the three current guided-missile destroyers; guns, data-handling systems and Standard missiles are all being up-dated, and these ships are expecte to remain operational into the 1990s.
• Under study is the possibility of fit-
ting the RAN Sea King helicopters with processing equipment for use with the Barra and other sonobuoys.
• The Government has decided to
proceed now with the acquisition of Blindfire radars to give Rapier units all-weather performance.
• Response will be sought from manu-

facturers and users interested in collaborating with Australia in the
development of an existing or a new aircraft to satisfy the Caribou and C-47 replacement need.
• Obsolescent air traffic control radars
and precision approach radars are being replaced, and tactical air-trans-portable radars are planned to ente service! by 1979. The radars of the two Hubcap air-defence systems are als being replaced. For the longer term over-the-horizon radar is being ex-amined.

• Air-to-air refuelling aircraft with supplementary airlift capacity are being considered.
• Two RAN HS.748s are to be heavily
modified for ECM training.

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