

Gregor Ferguson, Ph.D, BA (Hons), MRAeS

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KEY SKILLS:

Gregor Ferguson's key skills, knowledge and experience are analysis, communications and technical understanding. They include extensive domain knowledge of the Australian defence community including both the Department, as customer, and the defence industry; a detailed understanding of the Australian Defence Force's innovation, acquisition and sustainment priorities, and how these are expressed in the 2016 Defence Industry Policy Statement; an understanding of the potential for Australian companies, research organisations and academia to contribute to the national defence endeavour; the ability to understand technology and engineering concepts and their potential value in new and unexpected applications; the ability to 'join the dots': to analyse, understand and visualise a complex set of relationships between technology, customer need and opportunity, between parts of an organisation, or between different organisations; the ability to deal sympathetically and constructively with individuals, including senior leaders, from a wide range of professional backgrounds and interpret accurately what they say; and the ability to communicate this to others in terms that they can understand clearly.

His doctoral research and long experience of defence and manufacturing industry provides unique insight into stakeholder behaviours and attributes associated with innovation success.

SUMMARY:

Gregor Ferguson is a defence industry and innovation analyst and consultant and specialist writer. He is also the Executive Manager, Industry Development at the Aerospace, Maritime and Defence Foundation of Australia Limited, a not for profit foundation whose subsidiary companies (also not-for-profits) organise the biennial Australian International Air Show and Aerospace and Defence Exposition at Avalon Airport, the Pacific International Maritime Exposition in Sydney, the Land Forces Exposition, and the CIVSEC conference on civil security.

In 2016 he was instrumental in conceiving and then delivering CIVSEC, the first of a biennial series of Expositions and Conferences addressing the non-defence sectors of counter-terrorism, policing, border protection, cyber security, infrastructure and transport security, disaster response and emergency management. With only six months to achieve it, this involved mastering complex and varied subject matter, establishing close relationships with a multitude of new and unfamiliar government and industry stakeholders, and organising an intensive two-day, four-stream conference. CIVSEC 2016 was held in Melbourne in May-June 2016 and was judged a success by all participant and speakers.

An Industrial Designer by training, he has spent some 30 years observing and writing about high-technology industry, particularly the defence and aerospace sectors, but also the transportation sector more generally. In 2013 he was awarded a Doctorate of Philosophy by the University of Adelaide after completing a thesis titled "Product Innovation Success in the Australian Defence Industry – An Exploratory Study" at the University's Entrepreneurship,

Commercialisation and Innovation Centre (ECIC). In 2015 he was elected a Member of the Royal Aeronautical Society (RAeS).

In 2011 Gregor was a member of the team that created the Sydney Aerospace and Defence Interest Group (SADIG), an unincorporated body hosted by RDA Sydney that helps aerospace and defence companies in the Sydney basin identify and position themselves for strategic and business opportunities that can only be tackled on a collaborative basis. SADIG works closely with the State and Federal Governments and with industry bodies such as AIDN, AiG and ABDIU. In 2016 he assumed the Chair of SADIG's Innovation Sub-Committee.

Until the end of 2011 he was an award-winning defence and aerospace journalist and Editor at Large of Australian Defence Magazine, Australia's leading monthly defence and industry title.

In September 2009 he became the first Research Fellow of the Defence Materials Technology Centre (DMTC) in Melbourne, a Defence Future Capability Technology Centre based on the successful Co-operative Research Centre (CRC) model. During his three-month fellowship he conducted research into product innovation success factors and their possible relevance to the defence industry.

His extensive industry knowledge and analytical and writing skills have made him a sought-after writer and commentator. Until 2011 he was Australian correspondent for the respected US weekly newspaper Defense News and its sister publications Space News and Commercial Aviation News (now defunct), and remained (until starting his present job) a regular contributor to The Australian and a contributor to the Australian Strategic Policy Institute's annual Defence Budget review.

Gregor Ferguson operate his own defence business research and analysis consultancy, Rumour Control. In this role he has undertaken a number of market and business analysis tasks, including surveys of airborne electronic warfare market opportunities in the global export market; the Australian market for air-launched guided weapons; civil and commercial applications for IP resulting from defence-related R&D; a survey of naval sustainment opportunities in Australia; and a detailed analysis of regional and global trends in the acquisition of jet fighters and airborne weapons.

CAREER SUMMARY

2011-2017

Aerospace Maritime and Defence Foundation of Australia Limited (AMDA)

As Executive Manager Industry Development Gregor Ferguson's role, in simple terms, is to increase the business value to exhibitors and participants of the major events run by AMDA and its subsidiaries. He achieves this by providing industry and defence and civil market intelligence to the rest of the organisation and by managing a program of conferences and seminars at these events attuned to the business and technical needs of the exhibitors and trade visitors. He also tends AMDA's key relationships at the working level with State and Federal government agencies and industry associations.

He also monitors developments in the civil and commercial aviation, aerospace and marine markets in order to extend AMDA's major events further into the non-defence markets in Australia and the wider region. This includes building links with industry groups and companies in China, India and other nations in the region in order to attract delegates and exhibitors to Australia and to facilitate linkages between Australian industry and potential partners and customers overseas.

Gregor Ferguson initiated and manages AMDA's Industry Innovation Awards program which seeks to recognise and reward innovative Australian companies and young innovators. These are presented at each of AMDA's major events and more than \$200,000 in SME Innovation Grants and Young Innovator Scholarships have been presented since 2013.

Doctor of Philosophy – University of Adelaide

In 2013 Gregor Ferguson graduated with a Ph.D from the University of Adelaide for his doctoral thesis titled "Product Innovation Success in the Australian Defence Industry – an Exploratory Study". This part time research, over eight years, was based on case studies of successful and unsuccessful Australian defence innovation projects and resulted in a rudimentary model of innovation success factors along with other insights of value to the defence industry.

DMTC Research Fellowship

From September through November 2009 Gregor Ferguson was the first Defence Materials Technology Centre (DMTC) Research Fellow, studying generic innovation and commercialisation success factors and their possible relevance to the defence industry. The DMTC is an applied research organisation established in early 2009 by the Departments of Defence and Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (now Department of Industry and Science). Its role is to provide technology solutions enabling industry to enhance Australian defence capability. Implicit in this role is the requirement to develop and implement technology transfer and commercialisation mechanisms which will enable the results of industry-led collaborative research programs in advanced materials and manufacturing technology to be incorporated into defence industry products and services.

Previous Employment

As a freelance contractor Gregor Ferguson was the Editor and then Editor at Large of Australian Defence Magazine (ADM - published by Yaffa Media, Sydney, NSW), Australia's leading defence business title. This was described by the former Minister for Defence, Senator Robert Hill, as "required reading" in his keynote speech to ADM's first annual Defence Congress in Canberra in February 2004. He was appointed editor in August 1998 and stepped down from the position in January 2008 in order to devote more time to his Ph.D studies. Under his editorship ADM achieved a reputation for accuracy, insight, balance and credibility in its coverage of defence business and defence industry policy issues. In December 2009 he won the National Aviation Press Club award for best Aviation Defence Feature Article in 2009.

As a result both he and ADM's editorial team more generally were in demand to provide expert comment and editorial contributions for newspapers, think tanks and radio and TV news and current affairs programs.

ADM achieved and maintained its profitability and leading position in Australia's defence publishing sector through careful management of editorial resources and thoughtful selection of professional writers.

As a journalist Gregor Ferguson was a regular contributor to newspapers, specialist journals and think-tanks in Australia and overseas, principally:

- Defense News (Army Times Journal Publishing Co, USA)
- The Australian (News Ltd, Sydney)
- The Australian Financial Review (Fairfax Media, Sydney)
- Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) a leading defence and security policy centre established in Canberra by the Commonwealth Government

He is also proprietor of Rumour Control, a defence business research and analysis consultancy that is currently in suspended animation; in this role he has undertaken a number of defence market analysis and survey tasks for private and public sector organisations, including ASPI.

Before his appointment as editor of ADM in 1998 he worked as a freelance writer and media consultant for a number of corporate and government clients in Adelaide and elsewhere:

- Department of Defence Exports and International Programs Branch (EIP) - From 1994 to 1997 he developed an external publications program for the Defence Exports Branch of the Department of Defence's acquisition agency, the Defence Materiel Organisation (DMO), and produced many of the Branch's external newsletters as well as providing other media support and Public Relations services, notably for the two Defence Industry Trade Missions to the UK and South East Asia in 1997 which were led by then-Minister for Defence Industry, Science and Personnel, Mrs Bronwyn Bishop.
- Defence Science and Technology Organisation, Edinburgh, South Australia – from 1997 to 2000 he was a consultant to DSTO's Defence Science Communications organisation, writing internal and external newsletters, brochures and data sheets; he also developed and largely populated the Takari program web site. To enable him to work at DSTO at this time he obtained a 'Secret' security clearance which lapsed when he took up the Editorship of Australian Defence Magazine.
- Innovate SA – he was commissioned by the South Australian Department of Industry and Trade to research and prepare written summaries of significant innovations by South Australians over the past 160 years for the 'Innovate SA' exhibition which the Department organised in Adelaide in August 1995. These included social, cultural, political, medical, scientific and industrial innovations. The summaries were later included in a pocket brochure for exhibition visitors.
- Vision Abell Pty Ltd (now BAE Systems) Adelaide – From 1996 to 1998 he developed and wrote the company's external customer newsletter.
- CSSP Pty Ltd, Adelaide - a specialist construction and project management industry software developer for whom he wrote conference papers, media releases and news and feature articles.

Early Career highlights

In August 1987 Gregor Ferguson joined British Aerospace Military Aircraft Ltd (now BAE Systems PLC) in Kingston-upon-Thames, near London, as a public relations officer. Over the next three and a half years he helped maintain the high public profile of what were then the two largest US-UK joint ventures in the aerospace industry -- the British Aerospace-Boeing Harrier 'jump jet' fighter and Hawk/Goshawk jet trainer.

In 1984 he was appointed editor of two specialist defence journals, Defence Africa and the Middle East and Defensa Latino Americana, which were published by the Argus Press Group. Over the next three years the circulation and advertising revenue of both titles doubled. When they were reabsorbed by their parent title, Defence, in late 1986 he left Argus Press to spend a few months with Brassey's Defence Publishers in London as assistant editor of Defence Attache.

In 1980 he joined Marshall Cavendish Partworks Ltd, a leading London publishing house, where he learned the craft of journalism and spent four years on a range of consumer titles, rising to the rank of Deputy Editor. He specialised in technical areas: motoring and science & technology.

In 1978 He joined Chris Humberstone Design Ltd in Woking, near London, where he spent two years as a trainee designer and project manager working on specialist conversions of luxury and utility vehicles such as the Range Rover and Jaguar XJ12.

Personal Background

Born in Scotland and educated at boarding school in Edinburgh, Gregor Ferguson spent much of his childhood in Lagos, Nigeria.

He took an honours degree in Industrial Design (Transportation) at Lanchester Polytechnic in England (now Coventry University).

In 1991 he emigrated to Australia (he is now an Australian citizen) and brought his family to Adelaide where he covered the South Australian and national high-technology, defence and aerospace sectors for a range of newspapers and magazines both in Australia and overseas. In October 2006 he re-located to Sydney and re-married.

He has written two books: "The Paras: British Airborne Forces, 1940-1984" (Osprey Books, London, 1984), and "Coup D'Etat - A Practical Manual" (Arms & Armour Press, London, 1987). In 1996 he also co-wrote with John Green "Lighting the Fire", a privately published history of the DSTO Apprentice Training School.