

Macfarlane presses for definite answer on future of Cabarlah

The Federal Government must end the guessing games and reveal its intentions about the long-term future of the Borneo Barracks, Member for Groom Ian Macfarlane said.

"Defence Minister John Faulkner's release of parts of a report into the future of the barracks has created yet more uncertainty about whether the Cabarlah base will remain open or be forced to close under a Rudd Government rationalisation process," Mr Macfarlane said.

"This speculation cannot be allowed to continue. However, those concerned about the future of the base can take little comfort from the government's mixed messages.

"While the Defence White Paper failed to provide clarification when it was



Mr MACFARLANE
Mixed messages

finally released this year, months behind schedule, principles laid out for the placement of Defence properties indicated a strong case could be made in favour of retaining the Borneo Barracks at Cabarlah.

"The White Paper stated that key principles for

deciding the future location of Defence facilities include ensuring those facilities are dispersed for security reasons, ensuring facilities are in family-friendly and well resourced locations and ensuring both an urban and regional presence.

"It remains my firm view that the economic and social benefits of retaining the Borneo Barracks at Cabarlah outweigh those of merging it into a super base and I have made this argument clear in discussions with government ministers.

"The base attracts skilled workers and their families to our region and is a crucial part of our economy and our community.

"It's time for a definite answer from the Rudd Government about the future of the Borneo Barracks," he said.