

INTRODUCTION

Moving towards a new national defence science, engineering and technology capability

Modern nations have learnt that science, engineering and technology (SET) is the new power base of an agile, effective and robust defence capability. Across the defence activity – from policy and strategy setting, to force planning and deployment or the optimal use of available resources – the technology specialists are shaping ‘smart’ defence solutions and moving R&D beyond the traditional role of product development.

Advances in technology have escalated the sophistication of our forces – but also changed the threats societies face today. This is particularly true in the cyber domain – a new and prominent realm of warfare and risk exposure. A greater arsenal of readily available technologies, changes in the operations environment and the more surreptitious opponent in our communities are challenges forces now face.

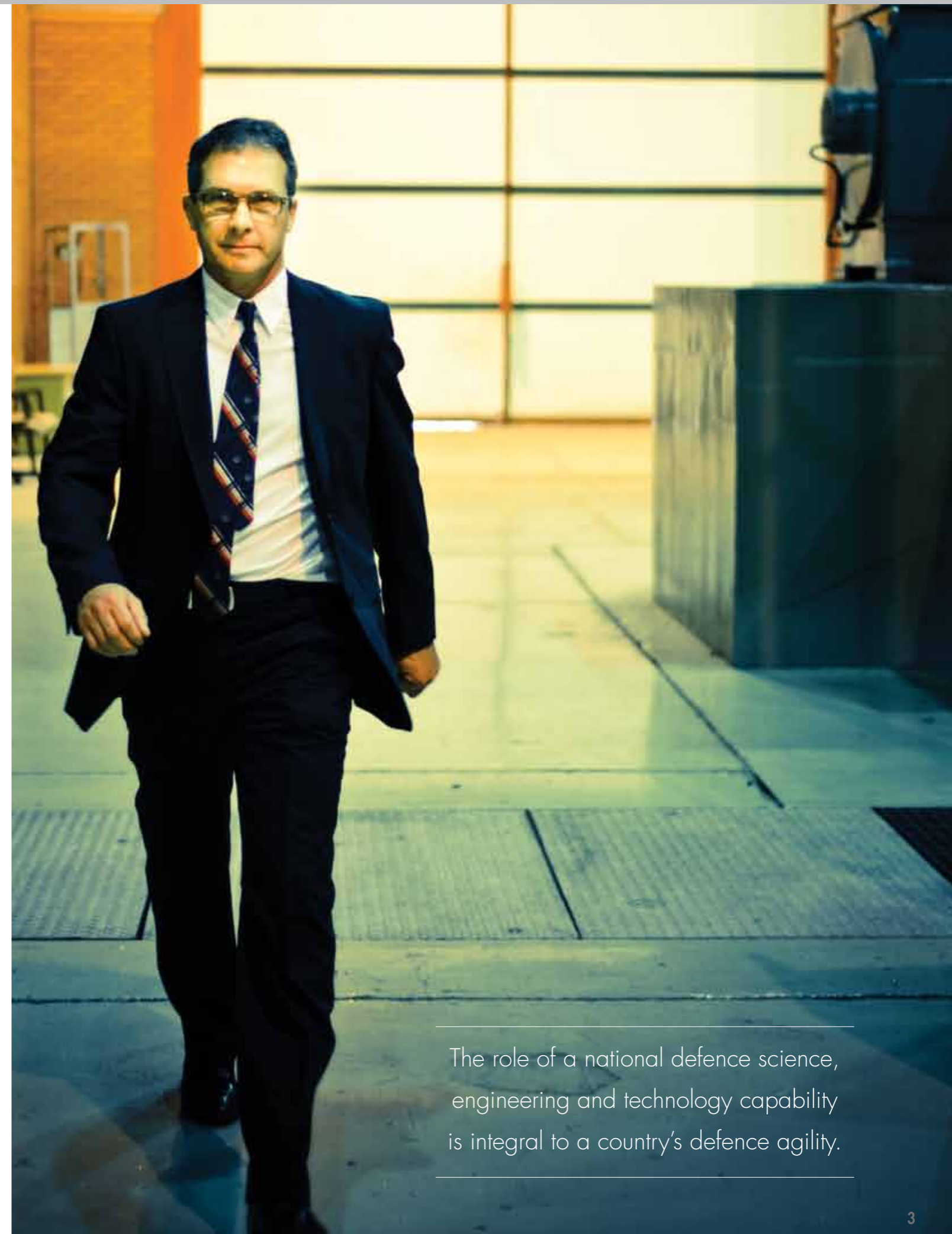
Therefore, **the role of a national defence science, engineering and technology capability** is integral to a country’s defence agility and needs to permeate business processes at all levels of the systems hierarchy. Stable and secure nations are not necessarily those with the most defence equipment, but rather those with the right technological capabilities in a ready state and access to the world’s technology and knowledge networks. In this, the national science, engineering and technology capability becomes a force multiplier.

We don’t pay lip service when we talk about technology development and application in defence and security. For decades the CSIR has been pivotal to South Africa’s advanced and ready defence capability. Our contribution is driven by a moral contract to protect the well-being of the country and its people. It is a role we share with the defence sector and one that requires unencumbered commercial independence, an immersion in the operational conditions that face our forces today and the technical skills and strategic involvement to respond.

The CSIR is proud to be a game maker in South Africa’s defence industry.



Andre Neppen
Executive Director, Defence and Security



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