

THE NAVY

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA



**THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY'S
CURRENT STATUS AND FUTURE**



**RECRUITMENT & RETENTION:
THE WARRIOR FACTOR**

**COST SAVINGS WITH
THERMOPHOTOVOLTAIC**

WHY WE NEED A NAVY

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Front cover: HMAS BALLARAT (FFH 155) conducts an Evolved Sea Sparrow Missile firing at sea, 2022 (image LSIS Leo Baumgartner)

07 CRITIQUE OF THE DEFENCE STRATEGIC REVIEW AND AUKUS

By NLA Defence Analysts

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Deterred by the Defence Strategic Review?

This delayed issue of *The NAVY* has at its core the Defence Strategic Review, examined alongside the defence of Australia by NLA Defence Analysts in *Flash Traffic* (pages 16-24). As underwritten by the Navy League of Australia, Statement of Policy (SOP), page 4. The four papers in this issue reflect, in part or full, the maritime perspective advocated by the NLA in *The NAVY* over many decades, in accordance with the SOP – as updated regularly, and verified annually at the League's General Meeting.

The NAVY begins with an essay by long standing maritime commentator, Kelvin Curnow (2nd place professional entry) entitled *The Royal Australian Navy – its current status and future prospects within the strategic context*. Kelvin presciently concludes:

Only reform of the selection processes and setting a continuous build programme in place will ensure the RAN has sufficient assets and the right ships to meet asymmetric security threats into the future. Moreover, only high-end assets will allow the RAN to deter those threats on an level, or even superior, footing.

The second paper is by a recent NLA member, contributor, and retired Army colleague, Geoff Hawkins (2nd Place, non-professional entry) examining *Recruitment and Retention: [in terms of] The Warrior Culture*. Geoff makes several valid points about the need for a *thinking, fighting, winning* Navy (and ADF). He notes that... ex and current members [of the RAN] all have some things in common:

- *salt water in their veins;*
– a love of the sea;
- *patriotism;*
– a sense of service;
- *all are honourable and ethical;*
– with a reliable moral compass.

Geoff suggests they also have a reliable moral warrior ethos, that he maintains is fundamental to understanding the discipline of war – essential for leadership (as opposed to management), and the successful application of retention and recruitment policies. Which he sees as being two sides of the same coin.

Continuing the theme, long standing Queensland members and contributors, John Rigby & Paul Sawtell, set out the case for *Why we Need a Navy – the Navy's Role in Protecting Democracy*. John and Paul conclude:

It is only in the quality of our people that we have never lacked. Let us hope our politicians however are not found wanting. If so, more sailors will pay the price of such failure.

The first three papers refer or draw upon research by the late General, Senator Jim Molan – supported by NLA Vice President Mark Schweikert – advocating support for an enhanced, fighting ADF capability. Able to think and demonstrably deter. The President delivers (in this issue) a vale for Jim Molan. He will be missed hugely by the NLA, *The NAVY*, and all those who knew and worked with / for him. Thank you for your Service, Sir.

The final paper is by a new author, Dr Dario Delgado on the *Potential Cost Savings with the Implementation of Thermophotovoltaic Cells in Major RAN Warships*. This continues a tradition of engineering and scientific pieces in *The NAVY* (including on gearing, radar, weapons, propulsion and cyber), going back over many years. Dario concludes, *inter alia*:

The global rules-based order is being challenged. The RAN needs to be more proactive, for the Government to approve a higher than two percent of the GDP for funding. The Defence Strategic Review (DSR) is an opportunity for reassessing costs. A potential threat could jeopardise supply lines; placing Australia in a vulnerable

space in terms of energy independence. Improving fuel efficiency is an indirect method for [reducing vulnerabilities]. If the RAN leads innovation, the Australian industrial sector could take advantage of the selection of these new technologies – resulting in a positive public perception for the ADF.

Vale Admiral James Goldrick

Many NLA members will recall and / or worked with Rear Admiral James Vincent Purcell Goldrick AO CSC RAN, who sadly died in Canberra, 17 March 2023. A moving eulogy for James was delivered by Vice Admiral Peter Jones AO DSC RAN with Dr David Stevens AM, at St Christopher's Cathedral, Canberra on 5 Apr – attended by family, shipmates, and senior Navy leadership. Admiral Goldrick made a significant contribution “to Navy understanding itself,” not simply as a widely published Naval Historian. But also, in his intellectual leadership and engagement, including with the Royal Navy and the *Naval Review*, and the US Navy and the USNI. James was an operational leader and strategist. Very much a *thinking, fighting, winning*, leader and warrior, deeply imbued in the Discipline of War, referred to by Geoff Hawkins in paper 2. God's speed Sir, as you report sunrise to our Father, on the eternal morning watch. You leave your Navy in a better place – ready, aye ready.

A Job Placement Agency

The NAVY and the Royal Institution of Naval Architects (RINA) in July 2020 (see *Flash Traffic*, Vol 82, Issue 3, pp. 18-19) were amongst only a few organisations to raise questions about the previous Government's Naval Shipbuilding College (NSC) and National Shipbuilding Institute (NSI). Amongst other things, *The NAVY* raised concerns about:

- the “college” being run by a communications specialist not a dean, without any qualifications as an academic;
- the lack of apparent formal engagement between RINA, and the publicly funded NSI, and its college – noting the rundown of funding for universities in NSW and Tasmania that had previously kept the flame of world-renowned Australian naval architecture alive.

Recognising a college “is an educational institution or establishment into which certain universities are separated, in particular providing higher education or specialised or vocational training with identifiable aims, duties and privileges, representing an organised group of professional people, and having its own teaching staff, students, and buildings,” *The NAVY* asked:

*If the NSC is simply a shell advocacy group for maritime political-financial-industry-complex [or Canberra Industrial Complex, see *Flash Traffic*] activism? Another policy-wonk think tank?*

Separately, concerns were raised with the Australian Naval Institute (ANI), regarding the soft NSC/NSI article and associated advertisement that appeared in the *Australian Naval Review* (ANR). The ANI (unlike, for example the ABC) is allowed to accept paid advertising, from defence companies and government quangos. Such as the (then) NSC and NSI.

In February 2023, announcing a detailed re-engagement of maritime education and training for 2000 workers in the next five years, as part of the AUKUS submarine program, the Hon Pat Conroy MP, the Defence Industry Minister, stated:

Any Australian training program would be to train people with new skills, and not replicate the previous Naval Shipbuilding College which didn't train any workers, but rather was an overly expensive job placement agency. The last government's naval shipbuilding college failed – it became a job placement



Navy (and Air Force) cannot deter, defend, and project force ashore without an Army to project – to protect the moat (image LCPL Tanner D Lambert).

agency and it did gap analysis of where skills were and they tried to place people. They spent \$100million to place 200 workers. That's half a million dollars for one placement: they didn't train, just place workers, so we are working through our workforce strategy now!

This raises three critical questions about "Government / Defence funded media":

1. whether they are, in reality "self-supporting organisations...,"
2. their independence;
3. the ethics and morality (*conscious bias*) of in-house sponsored publications accepting paid advertising.

Mr Conroy may have asked about "what \$100 Million could have done if invested" in, say, the Australian Naval Cadets – from whom most recruits come? Or a mere portion of which to maintain loyal, independent analysis and reporting by reinstating Navy's NLA subscription. Notwithstanding, the NLA continues to provide *The NAVY* free to all RAN ships and establishments.



NLA Motto: Keep Watch.

Deterred?

Concomitantly, the analysis of the Defence Strategic Review (DSR) by NLA Defence experts (pp. 16-22) is more detailed, honest, and searching than most that is likely to be produced in the mainstream media, Defence funded publications. Or by Canberra Think Tanks – many sponsored by Government.

The NAVY has been consistently critical of all Governments – whatever their colour – often proving correct. See *Statement of Policy*. The failure of the last Government to lead, by standing-up for all Australians and take on the excesses of State and Territory (S&T) Governments – after the first COVID wave – did damage to democracy, the economy, human rights, health, and the trust and confidence with which Commonwealth is held. Worthy, at the very least, of a Royal Commission.

Deterrence is to trust, as trust is to competence.

Released before ANZAC Day, the Defence Strategic Review (DSR) appears *unfocussed* and conflicted. Its undeclared aim of delivering "Schumpeterian creative destruction," unlikely – "exactly because, there is minimal creation, and maximal optimisation." Disguising real-dollar cuts and budget sleights-of-hand, it may be incoherent with the Foreign Minister's highly respected "managing the equilibrium," deterrence-based, foreign policy – requiring phased-defence, in depth. At the same time, apparently being *unconstitutionally, secretly, and divisively* bypassed (with Trade, and Defence) by the premiers of Victoria, WA, and Queensland (etc.), during their seemingly free-banquet-junkets to China. See *Letters* (p. 6). Exactly at a time of *peak threat*, when Commonwealth and S&T unity-of-command, preparedness, and readiness to respond – is fundamental to "managing Deterrence."

Navy (and Air Force) cannot deter, defend, and project force ashore (the key role of all navies and air forces) without an Army to project. To protect the moat (*behind, on, under, above, within, and beyond*). While welcoming the increased emphasis on Army Littoral Manoeuvre forces, the effective immobilising of Army and ADF by the DSR (and yet another Navy review), will leave Australia less able to deter in the critical timeframe. To build a credible joint force, requiring the tangible doubling of the ADF and its Defence budget to 180,000 personnel and 4%GDP – by 2035. Which neither the DSR, nor 5-6% annual increases in the Defence Budget will deliver. ■

STATEMENT OF POLICY

For the maintenance of the Maritime wellbeing of the nation.

The Navy League is intent upon keeping before the Australian people the fact that we are a maritime nation and that a strong Navy and capable maritime industry are elements of our national wellbeing and vital to the freedom of Australia. The League seeks to promote Defence self-reliance by actively supporting defence manufacturing, research, cyberspace, shipping, transport and other relevant industries.

Through geographical necessity Australia's prosperity, strength, and safety depend to a great extent upon the security of the surrounding seas and island areas, and on unrestricted seaborne trade.

The strategic background to Australia's security is changing and in many respects has become much less certain following increasing tensions, particularly in East Asia involving major powers, and in Europe and the Middle East. The League believes that Australia should rapidly increase the capability to defend itself, paying particular attention to maritime defence.

The Navy League:

- Believes Australia can be defended against attack by other than a major maritime power and that the prime requirement of our defence is an evident ability to control the sea and air space around us and to contribute to defending essential lines of sea and air communication with our allies.
- Supports a continuing strong alliance with the US.
- Supports close relationships with all nations in our general area particularly New Zealand, PNG and the South Pacific island States.
- Advocates the acquisition of the most capable modern armaments, surveillance systems and sensors to ensure technological advantage over forces in our general area.
- Advocates a strong deterrent element in the ADF enabling powerful retaliation at significant distances from our shores.
- Believes the ADF must be capable of protecting commercial shipping both within Australian waters and beyond, in conjunction with allies.
- Endorses the development of the capability for the patrol and surveillance of all of Australia's ocean areas, its island territories and the Southern Ocean.
- Advocates Government initiatives for rebuilding an Australian commercial fleet capable of supporting the ADF and the carriage of essential cargoes to and from Australia in times of conflict.
- Notes the Government intention to increase maritime preparedness and gradually increase defence expenditure to 2% of GDP, while recommending that this target should be increased to 3%.
- Urges the strength and capabilities of the Army (including particularly the Army Reserve) and Air Force be enhanced, and the weaponry, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, cyberspace and electronic capabilities of the ADF be increased, including an expansion in its UAV capability.
- Considers that the level of both the offensive and defensive capabilities of the RAN should be strengthened, in particular with a further increase in the number of new proposed replacement frigates and offshore patrol vessels, noting the need to ensure essential fuel and other supplies, and the many other essential maritime tasks.
- Recommends bringing forward the start date of the replacement frigate program to both strengthen the RAN and mitigate the local industry capability gap.
- Recommends the timely replacement and increase in numbers of the current mine-countermeasure force.
- Strongly supports the early acquisition of large, long range and endurance, fast submarines and notes the deterrent value, reliability and huge operational advantages of nuclear powered submarines and their value in training anti-submarine forces.
- The League is concerned at the very long time before the projected 12 new conventional submarines can enter operational service, noting very serious tensions in the NW Pacific involving major maritime powers.
- Recommends very early action to provide a submarine base on the Eastern seaboard.
- Notes the potential combat effectiveness and flexibility of the STOVL version of the Joint Strike Fighter (F35 *Lightning II*) and supports further examination of its application within the ADF.
- Supports the development of Australia's defence industry, including strong research and design organisations capable of the construction and maintenance of all warships, submarines and support vessels in the Navy's order of battle, and welcomes the Government decision to provide a stable and continuous shipbuilding program.
- Advocates the retention in maintained reserve of operationally capable ships that are required to be paid off for resource or other economic reasons.
- Supports a strong and identifiable Naval Reserve and Australian Navy Cadets organisation.
- Advocates urgent Government research and action to remedy the reported serious naval recruiting and retention problem.

As to the RAN, the League, while noting vital national peacetime tasks conducted by Navy, including border protection, flag showing/diplomacy, disaster relief, maritime rescue, hydrography and aid to the civil power:

- Supports the maintenance of a Navy capable of effective action in hostilities and advocates a build-up of the fleet and its afloat support elements to ensure that, in conjunction with the RAAF, this can be sustained against any force which could be deployed in our area of strategic interest.

The League:

- Calls for a bipartisan political approach to national defence with a commitment to a steady long-term build-up in Australia's defence capability including the required industrial infrastructure.
- Believes that, given leadership by successive governments, Australia can defend itself in the longer term, within acceptable financial, economic and manpower parameters.

Welcome to another great edition of *The NAVY* magazine. We have held this edition back to allow some commentary on the recent release of the Defence Strategic Review and there will be more commentary in future editions. As you consider the DSR please let us know your thoughts – we look forward to hearing from you.



Federal President Matt Rowe and Chief of Navy Vice Admiral Mark Hammond AM RAN present the NLA Efficiency Trophy to TS CANBERRA.

CONGRATULATIONS TS CANBERRA – THE MOST EFFICIENT ANC UNIT 2022

In February this year the Navy League's Australian Naval Cadets Award for the most efficient Training Ship was presented in Canberra. I was proud to represent the Navy League at the presentation and to continue a tradition of support for Australian Navy Cadets that has been ongoing since the formation of the Navy League Sea Cadets in 1920.

The award, a trophy in the form of a shield, was first presented to TS BARWON in 1959. Earlier that year, at its meeting in 1959, the Federal Council of the League first displayed the shield and determined that it would be awarded annually to the cadet unit judged to be the most efficient in Australia. These events are documented by our late great member Malcolm Longstaff OAM in his wonderful history of the League: *Keeping Watch* (2016). At that meeting the shield was handed to the officer with responsibility for the (then) Sea Cadets, Captain GD Tancred DSC RAN and has been awarded annually since to the unit deemed most efficient.

Captain Tancred's contemporary equivalent with responsibility for Australian Navy Cadets (ANC), Commodore David Greaves RAN (the Director General of the ANC), was present at this year's award. Commodore Greaves was also present at our Federal Council meeting and AGM in October 2022, presenting on issues affecting the ANC, and previous years, and has been a long-standing supporter of the Navy League.

The presentation of the award this year was conducted at the purpose-built HMAS HARMAN cadet precinct, the home of the deserving recipients TS CANBERRA. The events of the afternoon included a parade of the TS CANBERRA crew and review by the Chief of Navy, cadet unit activities and demonstrations and refreshments, and was a credit to all involved. Of particular note for congratulation were the Commanding Officer of TS CANBERRA, Lieutenant Cherrie Climas ANC and the parade commander, Cadet Chief Petty Officer Hudson and her crew. The events of the presentation afternoon

were a great credit to all involved, a fine spectacle and a clear demonstration of why TS CANBERRA was chosen as the year's most efficient ANC unit.

The presence of the Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Mark Hammond AM RAN, added even further to the importance of this significant award. It is an award that the Navy League continues to support over sixty years since its first inception. In addressing the cadets, their families and community leaders present, Admiral Hammond described himself as being a proud Chief of Navy, navy father and navy cadet father. His presence, in all of these guises, was a great reminder of the importance of the support the Navy League has provided, and continues to provide, to the navy cadet movement.

Well done TS CANBERRA and thank you CN.

SOME SAD NEWS – VALE SENATOR MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW JAMES MOLAN AO DSC

Those of you who have read recent editions of *The NAVY* will know of our contributor and great supporter of the Navy League, former Senator and retired Major General Jim Molan AO DSC, who sadly died in January this year after a battle with prostate cancer.

All with an interest in Australia's strategic circumstances will know of Jim's commitment to our national security arising from a long and successful military career and culminating in his contribution to our government through the Senate. He was always one to speak openly about our security and threats to Australia, with informed and independent views. Senator Molan's passing came as a surprise, he was present and in fine fettle at our Federal Council meeting and AGM in October last year and while noting he was unwell as a result of his cancer treatment, made a valuable contribution to our meeting, warning in his presentation of the risks to Australia's security, of regional security threats and encouraging serious thinking about our preparedness.

I extend my condolences, and that of the Navy League of Australia, to Senator Molan's family and friends.

NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA MARITIME AFFAIRS ESSAY COMPETITION

Contributions are now open for the Navy League of Australia Annual Maritime Affairs essay competition, so for those of you yet to submit an article for the essay competition it's time to get to work.

Details regarding the competition are inside the back cover of this magazine and I encourage you all to consider contributing. The annual essay competition calls for contributions on the topics of 21st Century Naval Warfare, Australian Naval History, Australian Industrial and Merchant Navy Maritime Strategy and Australian Strategic Alliances. There are prizes in professional and non-professional categories and the opportunity to have your paper published in a future edition of this, *The NAVY*. If that is not motivation enough to get researching and writing, there are substantial prizes on offer also for the winning entrants.

IN THIS EDITION

Once again, there is much very interesting reading in this edition of our Navy League magazine and I commend it to you. As you read this edition, I also encourage you to make a note or two and let us know your thoughts, in a letter to the editor or by drafting a future paper



Senator General Jim Molan
with Erin Molan and HMAS
CANBERRA (L02) - A Staunch
Supporter of Navy and the NLA
(Image Erin Molan).

or essay competition contribution. Your input will form an important part of future strategic planning and contribute to the thinking that leads to the future security and prosperity of this great nation of ours.

Our first article arises from the Navy League Annual Maritime Affairs Essay Competition. Kelvin Curnow's paper, *The Royal Australian Navy in its current status and future prospects within the Strategic Context* is a great read and received a well-deserved prize in the professional section of the essay competition. Many readers will have come across previous contributions from Mr Curnow, whose valuable articles have appeared previously in *The NAVY* magazine.

Our second paper is by Geoff Hawkins, writing on *Recruitment and Retention: The Warrior Factor*. I expect this article will generate significant discussion. In the current climate recruitment and retention remain issues of great concern. Our expanding Navy will need an increased workforce, which, in the face of a skills shortage and significant competition from other industries, means that retention of highly trained and valuable warriors will be crucial to our sovereign capabilities.

John Rigby and Paul Sawtell combine to produce another fine contribution to *The NAVY*, with their paper *Why we need a Navy – the Navy's role in protecting our Democracy*. This is a must read for anyone seeking to address the important, and fundamental, strategic considerations confronting Australian military development. Asking what appears to be the obvious, like why we need a Navy, often generates many more questions than initially arise and this article makes a substantial contribution to the discussion of Navy's important role in protecting our most fundamental of security.

We also have a most compelling paper from a new contributor, a currently serving navy engineering officer Dr Dario Delgado. Dario's paper *Potential Cost Savings with the implementation of Thermophotovoltaic Cells in Major RAN Warships* combines contemporary operational naval service, practical commercial considerations and emerging technological knowledge with a view to advantage the delivery of operational activities of the RAN. It is a great credit to have contemporary serving members contributing to the debate about our nation's future and we welcome such future contributions.

I trust you will enjoy this edition of *The NAVY*. It's a great credit to our editor and the editorial team, who are willing and enthusiastic professional volunteers making an excellent contribution to the important discussion of issues that affect our maritime nation. ■

Happy reading.

LETTERS

Dear Editor,

I have been examining the question of *Australian Defence Vessel's* (ADV) right and precedent to wear the 1967 Australian White Ensign (AWE). As far as I can tell, there is no right. In practice, colours (the AWE) are bestowed on *His Majesty's Royal Australian Navy* (and HM Australian Ships) by the Sovereign. Now King Charles, as represented through and by the Governor General. Note: New colours were presented to UK Armed Forces by King Charles, 28 Apr 2023.

Further examination, suggests ADVs may constitute an auxiliary fleet – similar, to the UK Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA). For which an ensign appropriate to Australian Defence Vessels was suggested by both *The NAVY* and *Headmark*, in 2014. Such a blue-ensign could represent auxiliary roles (e.g. combat logistics, oil, ordnance etc.), and Border Force functions. Including *Operation Sovereign Borders* – for which the *Cape class* are being procured. Supported by RAN crews – working alongside, with, or for, Merchant / Border Force mariners.



A separate matter may be backdoor republicanism? Removing King Charles from the five-dollar bill, for example, or replacing HMAS with ADV? Perhaps indicative, of the decision to elevate the (Commonwealth copyrighted (2022, 1971 designed) *Australian Aboriginal flag* (AAF), and the (1992 designed, 1995 adopted) *Torres Strait Islander flag* (TSIF), to co-equal status with the 1901 Flag of Australia (FOA)? These identity-based flags – representing 3.3% of the population – now have co-prominence in Government offices (and landmarks, e.g., Sydney Harbour Bridge), alongside the FOA. On this basis, should the 1978 *Rainbow flag* – representing 3.2% of Australian's *identifying* as LGBTQ+, be similarly co-elevated? Noting that some Ministers place the AAF as centremost in their "baronial" displays – is this correct? Is this what is intended? Preparing for removal-by-displacement of the FOA (and AWE); HMAS with ADV? Do the AAF and TSIF thereby confer de facto sovereign status? As demanded by some supporters of the *Indigenous Voice to Parliament* (IVP). Who apparently see sovereignty as the *de jure* extension of the High Court's 1992 Marbo decision?

The Governor General is the Commander in Chief. The Commonwealth is represented by its 1912 Coat of Arms, the (1901) Flag of Australia, State flags, and the Australian White Ensign. The 1876 state flag of NSW (representing 32.67% of Australia's population) no longer flies on Sydney Harbour Bridge. The AAF and TSIF are not [yet] sovereign (or "state") flags, or the national Flag of the Commonwealth of Australia. Together, they represent less than 95% of all Australians. *Prima facie*, are such "red-flags" preparing for a diminution of Commonwealth, of the role of the Governor General, the AWM, and the ADF?

Is this what our young people are being asked to defend? It seems politically divisive, concocted identitism – probably not in accordance with Commonwealth (common to all); or, potentially, the laws of armed conflict?

Yours Sincerely

Name Provided



ANALYSIS OF DEFENCE STRATEGIC REVIEW (DSR)

DIPLOMATIC CONTEXT

The most fundamental welfare is the security of our people. (Attr. Hobbes)

Combined with the Foreign Minister's elegant "Managing Equilibrium" brief to the National Press Club (17 Apr), the compartmentalising of AUKUS, the redacting of its innovation report, the reduction of financial and materiel aid to Ukraine, equivocation about the PM attending the July, Lithuanian NATO Indo-Pac conference, the release of the Defence Strategic Review during ANZAC week, the *ad hominem* colonial-era admonishment of a key ally (by the Foreign Minister, when visiting London), combined with Premier Andrews secretive visit to China – followed by the dropping of WTO claims against China (by DFAT) and an apparent invitation to the PM (also in July?) – all suggest the Government is pursuing a placation policy. Seeking to remove trade tariffs; maybe reengage the Belt & Road Initiative (BRI)? perhaps by aligning China's 14 (plus four) demands on Australia. Aspects of which may be incompatible with commitments to:

- deter a China-Taiwan conflict;
- prevent future pandemics;
- protect sovereign interests (including with the Pacific Island Forum);
- contribute to: ASEAN as a *dialogue partner*; as a member of the TPP, and other trading bodies and treaties;
- Key trading partners, such as Japan, the UK, and the EU;
- Five Eyes;
- AUKUS;
- QUAD;
- Five Powers Defence Agreement;
- ANZUS;
- Defence Training partners (U.S., Japan, Singapore, and South Korea);
- NATO (as a *key partner nation*).

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

For decades, *The NAVY*, [1-47], has been considering the effective defence of Australia. When many politicians, commentators, industrialists, consultants, and academics were pursuing other narratives. Including in Government, the APS, DFAT and, Defence. Quoted by Rear Admiral Andrew Robertson AO DSC RAN [37]:

What shall we do to be saved in this world? – There is no answer but this, look to your moat! The Marquess of Halifax (1694)

Your aim should no doubt be, if it were

possible, to prevent anyone else having a navy at all: the next best thing is to have on your side the strongest navy that there is. Thucydides' (433BC)

Target Australia

Between December 1941 and early 1942, Japan launched simultaneous attacks against Hawaii (Pearl Harbour), the Philippines, Guam, Wake Island, Malaya, Singapore, and Hong Kong. Subsequently occupying American, British, Dutch, and Australian Indo-Pacific territories; raiding naval bases in Ceylon, and bombing Darwin.

A consensus has emerged – identified by General, Senator Jim Molan and Mark Schweikert [31, 46, 47] – that the moment of *Peak Danger* may be between now and 2027. When, if not previously suborned, China (as stated by President Xi as part of *his Chinese Dream* (中国梦)), is most likely to inveigle Taiwan. At a time, after the U.S., UK (2024) and Australian (2025) elections, when they may all be at their weakest. Before recovery, rearmament, new designs (and re-industrialisation) kicks in.

Cut, Hit, Seize

The Russian 2022 war on Ukraine has changed the calculus. Heroic Ukrainian resistance may indirectly make things more dangerous for Australia. If a quick defeat had occurred, China might have entertained a less robust Taiwan strategy. The protracted defence of Ukraine – moving into an attritional phase – seemingly changed China's doctrine of "hit hard and first" to:

Cut off, hit hard, seize the initiative

隔断,用力打,抓住机遇 – or:

Cut, Hit, Seize (Pre-empt)

切,打,抢占

The doctrine has parallels with the Mahanian, Japanese WW2 Decisive Battle Doctrine (艦隊決戦, Kantai Kessen), [28] whereby Japan would seize key objectives and then establish a defensive perimeter to defeat Allied counterattacks – as a basis for negotiation.

Great Steel Wall (钢铁长城)

The "hit hard platform" / *speerpunkt*, is represented by China's *Dragon's Spear* (鯨矛); launched from its *String of Pearls* (珍珠链) – China's First and Second Island Chains. [24] Its motte, keep, bailey, mote (islands), and moat (SCS) – that make up its Great Steel Wall (GSW). [11]

Following the *cut-off first doctrine*, if China is to successfully invade Taiwan, it will need first to lock down its defensive perimeter (the GSW). In such a scenario, it is almost inconceivable that Australia would not find

itself simultaneously on the front line – as a negotiation precursor.

No Limits Axis (NOLA)

Examining the *No Limits Axis* between China, Russia, (and Iran), the countries connect contiguously (through Pakistan) the Bering Sea, the Philippine Sea, the South China Sea, the Bay of Bengal (through Myanmar) the Gulf, the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea (through Yemen, via Djibouti and Port Sudan), with the Mediterranean (through the Hezbollah / Islamic Republican Guard Corps controlled Syria and Lebanon), to the Black Sea, the Baltic, and the Barents Sea. The recent Chinese led rapprochement between Iran and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (and with Hamas), is a strategic coup – with Saudi Arabia looking to join the *Shanghai Cooperation Organisation*.

A revanchist, No Limits Axis poses an existential challenge to the Global rules-based order. Not simply regarding Ukraine, the Straits of Hormuz and Taiwan – but also to energy costs and security. Putting significant pressure on the US Dollar remaining the prime currency.



The No Limits Axis (NOLA) 120th Easterly Meridian, from south-north.

The Asymmetric Axis

Traditionally, the threat (e.g., during the Cold War) was seen in terms of an east-west axis. Whereas, NOLA asymmetry lies north-south (along the *120°E Meridian*, GMT + 8hrs) – connecting China's Antarctic Belt, through Australia, the South China Sea, China, and Russia-Siberia (upon which China is making increasing claims), with the Arctic. As Professor Michael Wesley recognised, in 2016:

"to find a Mackinderian formula, the Three Peninsulas hold the key to the Bays; the Three Bays hold the keys to the Peninsulas. So, for example, the further expansion of Chinese influence down the Indo-Pacific Peninsula will further split ASEAN [and QUAD] solidarity, allowing the continuing advance of Beijing's claims in the South China Sea. Creeping Chinese



control over the South China Sea brings it closer to its goals in the West Pacific Peninsula – what Chinese strategists call the First Island Chain – including by ramping up the pressure on territorial disputes with Japan in the East China Sea”. [45]

By removing Australia as the *stopper* (at the top of the *Three Bays and Three Peninsulas*), East is divided from West (the U.S. and Japan, from India), along the *NOLA (120°E), Meridian*; connecting both poles and, thematically, Mahan (1840-1914), with Mackinder (1861-1947).

The Cyber Axis

In “looking to its moat”, Australia will need to secure its Cyber-maritime. Where a Grey War may well have begun.

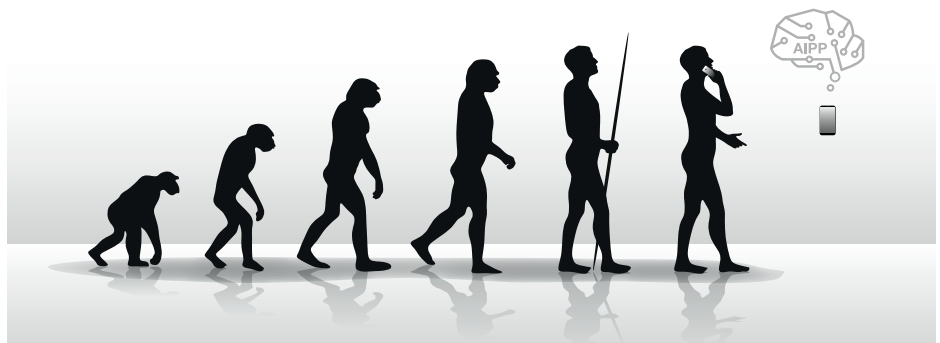
- 95% of all international cyber-internet traffic come across high speed submarine cables (HS2C).
- There is no global Southern-Hemisphere, HS2C. All southern-hemisphere cables connect east-west through northern risers.

Australia's Cyber Axis currently runs north-south, parallel to the *NOLA Meridian* – through contested / captured islands, seized by Japan between Dec 1941 and Feb 1942. Its three main risers connect between:

1. Perth, Christmas Island, Jakarta (through the Malacca Straits) and Singapore;
2. Sydney, Guam (via the Coral Sea, close to the Solomon Islands), and Japan (Minami-Boso);
3. Sydney, Hawaii (Makaha), and Auckland, Hawaii, with Japan, Guam, and Los Angeles.

Australia is vulnerable to any constraints placed in the Malacca Strait, or the South China, and Coral Seas. There is also no highspeed maritime cable connecting Australia's capital cities. As of 2018, a HS2C connects Sydney to Perth via the Bass Strait and Great Southern Ocean (*Indigo Central*), and Perth to Jakarta (*Indigo West*).

An interrogative from Adelaide to Canberra and back currently travels 13656 km (7374nm) along the railway lines, from Adelaide, via Port Augusta, to Perth, to Sydney, to Canberra, return; switching about 20 times. Equivalent to travelling 34% of the world's circumference, or Adelaide to Hong Kong, return. The result is time critical packages – e.g., for financial transactions – become un-synched due to time latency. An Adelaide-Canberra HS2C would reduce the distance by two thirds (4454km / 2405nm) and switching, by 50%, or more. The situation has not advanced much since the days of steam and telegraphy!



From Ape to AIPP? (AI Application) - Image and Caption NLA (SRAKCAM), 2023.

New Scientific Axis

The world is entering a new scientific age, 2020-2064, at the end of the *Information Age* (1975-2019) – typified at its start by instability and uncertainty. The new scientific age, described as the *Synthetical Age*, will be defined by the synthesis of quantum, AI, and nano-technology (QAIN). All of which will challenge the employment of people and the transfer of culture and knowledge.

ChatGPT (+) has profound moral and ethical implications. Sending young people up against / potentially to die fighting an AI App (from Ape to AIPP?) raises questions about war, the laws of armed conflict, and the contest of ideas and humanity. Previously one and the same.

A Global Minority

According to the Economist's Intelligence Unit (EIU), [52] the democratic Global West, comprises 72 (37%) of the UN's one hundred and ninety-five nation states. About 43 countries (22%) imposed sanctions against Russia. Representing sixteen percent of the world's population – although, 61 percent of global GDP. [53]

While almost all sanctions on Russia are by democracies – the majority from the EU, NATO, AUKUS and, regionally, by Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan – it is a minority of the UN. In the event of an attack against Taiwan (a democracy), it is unlikely that this will improve. Regionally, Australia and Japan are likely to be on their own.

Being the minority of nation states and by population, should enable asymmetric agility, in terms of industrial and financial effectiveness. For this to occur, the Global West (for all its imposition of non-Millsian ethical virtues) may need to recognise it is increasingly unpopular, distrusted, nor in the majority. In the UN and elsewhere.

A STRATEGIC FORCE

A critical weakness of reviews is their focus on optimising what exists. Which only works, if what exists is right and in balance.

Mention review and ADF/APS personnel fear the answer: “more for less.” Where less equals people. For example, the 2015 *First Principles Review* that led to the disastrous conflation of Capability Development with Defence Materiel. By failing to set out what the ADF should look like, the DSR plays into this perception.

The “take it or leave it” recipe given to Defence – as warned by CDF – means that programs will be cut, in order to pay for nuclear submarines and other select programs. Leaving the Services and APS to protect their own. This is not the basis for cooperation – quite the reverse. For Army supporting Navy, or Army and Navy supporting the Air Force – to get the best deal for Australia.

Force: from Defence to Armed?

Jointness is both a strength and weakness. Lack of political representation creates a managerialist, divide and rule mentality – to the detriment of cooperation. Particularly when under existential threat of cuts. Recognising the move from defence to the projection of cooperative, focussed joint force, affirms the need to restore Navy, Army, and Air political secretaries / ministers.

Given his handling of the Brereton Report, extension in post (for the DSR); its handling and cost cutting (of Army in real terms), CDF may consider resigning. To safeguard what remains, and allow a new thinking-fighting leadership to emerge.

Rebuilding

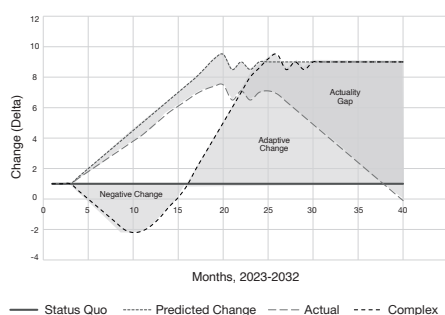
Rensis Likert, in galvanising U.S. shipbuilding after Pearl Harbour, removed the top layer of management (bringing some back as advisers) and bootstrapped middle management and blue-collar foremen into senior leadership positions. Similar brevet promotions occurred in the military.

The DSR fabricates a \$42bn ‘black hole’ in the defence budget which is forcing the Government to cancel, reshape or defer current capability projects in order to fill. By these actions, do the authors not also admit that the Government is unwilling to fund the so-called black hole? If there was a black

hole, and Government was serious about Deterrence, they would stump up the funds to fill it. Not by robbing Army to pay Navy.

The DSR essentially applies the *von Neumann turnpike*, based on misplaced concepts of *Schumpeterian creative destruction*. Exactly because, there is minimal creation, and maximal optimisation. [48] It is predicated on cutting some programs (substantively hollowing out Army), to rapidly capitalise others (Submarines, Air, Space, Cyber, Guided Weapons, UA/S/U/Vs) through *predictive change*. All orchestrated by the *accountant consultancies*, who run Defence.

Without investing in change-leadership, there will be paralysis, as the shock works through the system, caused by the removal of programs and management teams. As for collectivisation (*Holodomor*) and the Great Leap Forward (both leading to famine), people will become fearful.



Predictive Change

The consultancy-model assumes a control system response. A stimulus is injected, Key Performance Indicators (KPI) set, and a linear, predictable, managed response, with a few perturbations, follows. In 20-months you are there. Change is led; not managed. It is costly and requires investment and trust. The actual response lags the predicted. Made worse by fixed indicators encouraging deceptions. People know the result of not reporting the “expected KPI.”

Ten Year Rule

After ten years, the actuality gap is so wide, that everyone notices – but there is no one to hold accountable. So “new-same-revised” consultancy models are applied, and it starts all over again. Except worse than before.

Adaptive Change

Defence is a complex system. If it is to change, it requires investment to change (leadership, time, and dollars) – during which there will be negative change. Got right, and the system will get there, even by 2025. Got wrong and it never will.

Capitalisation

According to the DSR, the defence budget will increase at a slightly higher rate than was previously earmarked in the forward estimates by the former Government. But with a target well under 2.4% of GDP, this is

a training and exercise capability budget. Other nations who have accepted the threat of war with China are already closer to or well above 3% of GDP.

The DSR “recommitted to funding at a growth rate of 5-6 per cent per annum” [after 2027] but does not measure against tangible outcomes. Such as size of Force, percentage of GDP, by when. Setting aside the false savings generated by optimisation, current inflation rates suggest that increases of 8-9 per cent per annum, will be required to realise 4% GDP by 2035. Particularly if the focus is to be on designing and building a new ADF.

New capital (\$2B a year) will need to be found. The 10% savings (over 10 years) articulated by the DSR (also to fund nuclear-powered submarines), will not be enough. Transferring deck-chairs from one place to another, will not enable change – rather feed fear and *stasis*.

The DSR attempts to select winners – always dangerous; noting the emergent qualities of strategy, economies, industry, and navies. By cutting some capabilities and deferring others, the government is inadvertently sending a strategic signal to Beijing that these are the areas Australia is vulnerable in.

For this reason, ANSON [1] developed a capitalisation model, using the innovation and discipline of the market, to fund the building of a versatile surface fleet, based upon modularised merchant hulls. From PBs, MCMs, Frigates and Destroyers to Heavy Lift ships (LSDs) and Air Capable Transports ships (fleet carriers). The model remains urgently pressing today, for capitalising Defence as a whole. It has been taken up – without capitalisation – by the Royal Navy.

Research and Development

Studies of UK and U.S. Defence budgets indicate that, for an adaptive / agile force, about 15% of the budget should be spent on *Research, Development*, and *Experimentation*, and up to 5% on Cyber. The current annual DSTG spending is about 1% of the Defence budget whereas *Cyber* is around 3% (increasing to 5% under the DSR). Since 2013, DSTO has become DSTG and, like CSIRO, has become less scientific laboratory; more management consultancy. The DSR does nothing to address this thematic weakness, or indicate how R&D will be funded at appropriate levels. The complete redacting of David Peever's (2022) “comprehensive review of Defence innovation, science and technology” gives little confidence.

AUKUS

After decades of effort, and at times hyperbolic criticism, the Navy League's

proposition and advocacy on nuclear powered submarines has finally come to fruition. What started in 2021 with a surprise announcement by the former Government about the acquisition of nuclear-powered submarines has survived an election with a plan now agreed by the three leaders of Australia, UK, and US, in a pact known as AUKUS, for Australia to join the exclusive SSN (Submarine Attack Nuclear) club.

It should be noted that AUKUS is much more than just an SSN acquisition program. It is a response across all facets of military and national security strategy to the massive military build-up of China and its stated intention to forcibly reclaim Taiwan through military means, if needed, and impose its will around the world. Free democratic countries are naturally concerned at the prospect of a Communist regime destroying a thriving democracy of approx. 24 million people and the potential post-consequences for an emboldened Chinese foreign policy.

The three-stage plan to acquire a fleet of new build SSNs involves exposure, interim acquisition, eventual build, and commissioning of eight new SSNs as a full operational capability.

Stage one of the plan, exposure, involves embedding RAN personnel with USN and RN submarines, increased port visits by USN and RN SSNs and an SSN Rotational Force-West, known as SRF-W, of up to four USN SSNs and one RN SSN, beginning this year, based out of HMAS STIRLING in WA. This stage will also generate the requirements for Australia to start investing in SSN maintenance and facilities to base its SSNs in country.

Stage two, interim acquisition, involves purchasing three existing USN Virginia Class SSNs (Block variant unknown at this stage) to expand Australia's stewardship capacity and provide an SSN capability as soon as possible. There is also the potential to sell up to two more if strategic circumstances require it. The first Virginia class SSN is planned to be delivered to the RAN in the early 2030s. Acquiring Virginia class SSNs as an interim capability to an eventual full capability will ensure there is no submarine capability gap during the retirement of Australia's existing diesel-electric powered *Collins-class* submarine fleet, which at this stage will still undergo its full Life Of Type Extension (LOTE). The 3 reduced LOTE + 3 *Virginias*, recommended by Dr Baird, [5] as announced by the DPM, Richard Marles, may also be pursued.

Stage three, full operational capability, involves partnering with the UK and US under the AUKUS agreement to deliver a trilaterally-developed SSN based on the UK's next-generation design, the SSN(R), incorporating cutting edge technology from all three nations. This submarine will be the apex predator of the sea.



SSN-AUKUS

Known at this stage as *SSN-AUKUS*, it will be the future attack submarine for both Australia and the UK, with both countries to start building in their domestic shipyards before the end of this decade.

Australia plans to deliver its SSN-AUKUS in the early 2040s, while the UK will deliver its first SSN-AUKUS to the RN in the late 2030s, which should help Australia with some de-risking in the build process.

The new SSN is expected to have its reactors plants built by Rolls Royce with the combat system and weapons by the US. The reactor plants will be closed for the life of the submarine and thus not require the complex and expensive refuelling of older generation reactors. Australia will be responsible for disposal/storage of the reactor plants once decommissioned.

DSR STRATEGIC?

Everyone knows that Air Forces are the coolest part of any military, and since we last met of course, Top Gun Maverick has graced cinemas around the world.

Deputy PM (DPM) Richard Marles, 2023 Avalon Air Force Conference

As the DPM knows, Captain Pete “Maverick” Mitchell BSc is a US Navy aviator. Like the Fleet Air Arm, the best of the best. Its pilots should, by now, be flying the F-35B, along with all major allies.

Forty-two years ago, the UK Government’s ‘Nott Review’ into defence capability and posture was released which, by its cuts, strategic assumptions, and policies, prefaced the 1982 Falklands. The Argentines saw the review’s implementation as an opportunity to embark on military operations. Such is the power of defence reviews.

Fast forward to 2023 Australia; the Albanese Government’s much awaited and hyped Defence Strategic Review was published the day before Anzac Day. If, by its opening statement on page 5 “*There is no more important and consequential task for Government than protecting the security, interests and livelihoods of its people*” then the review has already failed. Historians in the future will record this Government policy paper as a missed opportunity for deterring war in the 2020s. Much like the Nott Review.

There are no real substantive changes from the previous Government’s announced decisions on defence capability. Some of the highlights of the DSR, and the Government’s acceptance of its recommendations include;

- a move to a “National Defence Strategy” using a Denial tactic;
- abandonment of the balanced force concept in favour of a “focused” (or unbalanced) force;

- more ammunition stock holdings;
- greater involvement and frequency of exercises;
- another review into surface combatant type and numbers for Navy;
- a new level of bureaucracy to examine capability decisions chaired by the Chief of Defence Force and Department Secretary with another layer of external oversight of the department’s implementation of the DSR, and,
- potentially a little more funding, but through cutting and cannibalising other projects.

Service	Permanent	Reserve	Total ADF (2035)
Navy	24,200	5,800	30,000
Army	72,000	48,000	120,000
Air Force	21,600	8,400	30,000
Total	117,800	62,200	180,000

Conservative estimates suggest a war would require spending of 20-30% of GDP. An investment of 4% GDP would assist greatly in preventing further excessive war spending later. This argues for doubling the size (and budget) of the ADF by 2035, to 180,000 (30,000 Navy), including:

- A *Joint Littoral Manoeuvre Force* (JLMF) – including ships and LHDs (as per the WW2 *First Corp*) comprising also 12,000 (10%) of Army as the remobilised Third Division; [34]
- A Fleet Air Arm and RAAF *Joint Lightning II Force* (JLF) using F-35B modified LHDs and a new carrier.

The Defence Strategic Review did not answer “what the ADF should look like in 2035?” Instead, it called for yet another Review (of Navy). It is not strategic, exactly because it was done in a hurry, to address peak 2025-2030 Defence shortfalls. Necessary to buy operational, not *strategic* time. This is both its strength – providing urgency and killing off zombie programs – and its weakness. It does not set out what Defence should look like in 2035, and beyond – against tangible numbers and a percentage of GDP. Against which planners might plan – and some pain might be offset, or at least be explained by what is coming.

Holding the Moat

To protect the moat, one must operate behind, on, under, above, within, and beyond the moat.

Paragraph 4.1 in the DSR says “we recommend the Government directs Defence to adopt a strategy of denial.” Paragraph 4.3 goes on to say “Deterrence exists in an adversary only as a ‘state of mind.’ This makes credibility in deterrence especially important, while also making the success of

deterrence posture and effects very difficult to assess.” The very real danger here is if the enemy does not believe it or wants to take the risk, then our new strategy is already defeated. If the Government does not make the appropriate investment in all defence capabilities, then an enemy will certainly not believe the strategy.

The big loser in the DSR is Army. More specifically, its armoured capability. While Army is to have its existing regional/littoral manoeuvre watercraft project accelerated (how, by what means and when is open to interpretation), it loses over 321 new Armoured Infantry Fighting Vehicles or AIFVs (to replace the existing Vietnam war era M-113 APCs) and a regiment of approx. 45 self-propelled Howitzers. This will reduce Army to a shoot and scoot one shot/strike capability.

If Army is to project power, defend, hold, and secure land, it needs armour and artillery. The lesson of Ukraine is not that armour and artillery are unneeded – as the provision of *Challengers, Leopards, and Abrams*, is showing. It is how they are designed, applied, and deployed. The same applies at sea, where surface vessels are necessary for sea control and force projection.

Contrastingly, does Australia need 50 (and more) HIMARS, at \$5.1M a piece – useful only if landings have occurred? Which makes them beside the point – unless they are deployed forward. Requiring land, maritime, and air projection to do so. Or, is their value in export, at \$250M to the Australian taxpayer? The HIMARS decision illustrates two points:

- First, that foremost Australia needs to be able to deter attack by defending the home base. If forces are already landing, it is too late;
- Secondly, defence of the home base requires the capability to hold, secure, control, and hold the moat – by projecting Force.

Airforce experiences little change with its AGM-158C LRASM anti-ship missile acquisition and integration with Super Hornet and JSF re-announced, and an acceleration of its Integrated Air and Missile Defence (IAMD) project, which had already fallen behind schedule. The JSM, an air launched version of Navy’s NSM anti-ship missile, was also re-announced for F-35.

Navy, hot on the heels of this review, will get another review but this time on its surface combatant fleet with the view to justifying the introduction of a corvette sized vessel and a return to the old 1986 ‘Dibb review’ concept of Tier 1 and Tier 2 combatants. Navy will also get an East coast submarine base for the new AUKUS nuclear powered submarine, in addition to already announced facilities upgrades in the West.

Whereas announcements of an enhanced

sea-mine capacity, guided weapons manufacturing, basing, Ballistic Missile Defence, cyber, and drones, are significant, they are essentially defensive. As currently envisioned, are long-range strike, Tomahawks, and submarines. All of which will require supporting forces, if they are to deliver a deterrence capability. Fundamental to surviving a first *Cut, Hit, Seize* (切, 打, 抢占) strategy. Hence the importance of Domestic and Maritime Operations to Deterrence. And the lead being taken by Army's re-constituted Second Division, supported by Navy MAROPS.

REVIEW LEADS

On three grounds, the choice of DSR leads could be questioned:

1. Bipartisanship;
2. Bias / conflicts of interest;
3. Competence (in Command).

The Defence Strategic Review led by Sir Angus Houston and Stephen Smith (now Australian High Commissioner to the UK), advised by Professor Peter Dean, would have stretched any leads.

Sir Angus was Chief of Air Force between 2001 and 2005, and CDF between 2005 and 2011 – when Prime Minister Gillard had “something of a crush on him”. He presided over the introduction of the *Joint Strike Fighter* – which ruthlessly suppressed alternative suggestions for the F-35B, carrier variant. Flown by all key allies. It was the then Chief of Army support for the LHDs (CANBERRA and ADELAIDE) that allowed Navy to procure these vital ships. Sir Angus was CDF when the decision was taken on the LHD design. Essentially *strategic vandalism*, meaning they could not carry the F-35B without modification. Before becoming CDF and following his departure in 2011, Sir Angus was involved with asylum seeker policy. The successful *Operation Sovereign Borders* policy was designed by General, Senator Jim Molan and introduced by Prime Minister Abbott, under Scott Morrison, General Angus Campbell and, then, Rear Admiral Michael Noonan. Sir Angus then headed the Joint Agency Coordination Centre in its unsuccessful search for MA 370.

The Honourable Stephen Smith was a solicitor, lecturer, and tutor, before entering politics as an adviser to Paul Keating and winning a seat as an MP, in 1993. Between 2007 and 2010, he was Minister for Foreign Affairs, under Prime Minister Rudd (now Australian Ambassador to the U.S.), briefly Minister of Trade, before becoming Minister of Defence (2010-2013) under Prime Ministers Gillard and Rudd. While Minister for Foreign Affairs, Smith was party to Rudd's China rapprochement. Although Quad members were similarly pursuing warmer

China policies, it was Smith's comment to the Chinese Foreign Minister that “the May 2007 meeting was a one off” and that “our priority emphasis has been on this trilateral dialogue [US, JP, AS] among the three allies” – that broke QUAD 1.0. During his time as Minister of Defence, Smith presided over the running down of the Defence Budget (to its lowest ever post-war level), to build a war chest for the 2013 election. As boat people came in their 1000s, hundreds of sailors were deployed recovering bodies and policing an unstoppable and unworkable policy. Smith was found to have incorrectly removed a naval Commodore from ADFA, as a result of the (2012) Skype scandal.

In 2015, Peter Dean, as a junior academic (now with the University of Sydney, Governments funded US Study Centre), wrote for *The NAVY* [20] on amphibious strategy.

Yes, Prime Minister

The handing over of the Defence Strategic Review on 14 Feb was assiduously emblematic [54]:

Sir Angus: *this is a product of six-months of work and I think it addresses all the Terms of Reference and we're very pleased with that.*

PM Thank you.

Sir Angus: *Only sad that Stephen is not here.*

PM Yes but he is serving in a different way.

Sir Angus: *I hope it does everything you need it [the DSR] to do and it is on the money. We are very happy with it.*

PM. Thank you. We are on top of the direction you are heading... This is the most significant piece of work [on Defence and Security] in 35 years. It is another entry on your contribution to the nation, really appreciated...

Sir Angus: *I think it was really good doing it in just over 6 months. When you compare to similar processes all done in twelve to eighteen months, and here we are in 6 months...*

PM: Part of the Government's Productivity Agenda...

Sir Angus: *...and also, I think it reflects a great example of the urgency required.*

PM. And having a former CDF and Defence Minister, and Foreign Minister, I think has really helped as well, not like you were coming in from without...

Sir Angus: *...well Stephen was right across it.*

PM: This is the most significant piece of work in 35 years, adopting to the new strategic environment that we face.

DPM: We have been talking with Stephen prior and I think both of you felt this was the single most important [thing you have been] involved in, in Defence – which is a big call

for both of you...

Sir Angus: *Six years as CDF and 4 as Chief of Air Force before that, but this is the most important piece of work...*

PM: Well, you've earned a cup of tea in my office for all that.

It is unclear which consultancy supported the DSR. If it is the same as for the UK 2010 SDSR, then there should be grave concerns. It should not be a triumph that something so fundamental took only 6 months. The holes were evident, in pre-emptive talk of Army tanks (defending Queensland (PM)); judicious partisan leaks to the Canberra literati; promoting Air Force strike; HIMAR, and, the procurement of nuclear-powered submarines. Few of which are likely to allow for a Joint response by the Chiefs, and which may break ADF along Service lines. As they seek to protect the furniture.

Sir Angus was in Defence long enough to know the old Army adage, that “hope is not [a really good] plan! (or DSR)” nor “on the money”.

THE CANBERRA INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (CIC)

Eisenhower (1961) warned of the Military Industrial Complex (MIC) – and its potential excess. An Australian equivalent may be the CIC?

Atop the CIC sits the Prime Minister and Cabinet Office (PM&C). A “sofa” begun under John Howard; now comprising over 1300 unelected staff – including 100s of unanswerable, contracted special advisers, unaccountably “on loan” from the consultancies. Its tentacled franchises replicating all ministries. Its gatekeepers telling ministers and PMs what to do. As Jim Molan recognised, unlike in the U.S., there is no National Security Agency (NSA) in Australia, to support the National Security Committee (NSC). So, the PM&C also superintends the NSC, in addition to the Office of National Intelligence (ONI).

Unconscious Bias?

Social Identity Theory holds that “Unconscious Biases are social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness”.

Based on AEC voting data, up to 48% of the primary vote may be for parties of the left – with 28% of Australians voting for politicians representing inner-city (mostly Labor, and Greens) seats. A “class,” from which many contemporary politicians are drawn. In 2022, the Canberra electorate voted over 40% in favour of left wing and green politicians; 66% overall for left leaning parties – cf., 20% for centre right parties (Liberals) and 14% for Nationals.

Canberra's electorate comprises employees



of head offices, industry, Defence, lobbyists, academe, the High Court, banks, public institutions (APS, ABC, RBA); utility companies, consultancies, and commissions.

A Counterfactual

Ex Prime Minister Abbott acknowledges that QUAD 2.0 was the product of two fathers: Shinzo Abe and Narendra Modi. In fact, it has three: the third being Tony Abbott.

If Abbott had not been ejected by [the CIC and] his own Party, Australia, today might have the fourth of a dozen evolved *Tagei-class* submarines in build, and HMAS ATTACK (S79), completing first of class trials, in the U.S. Following a 6-month delay due to COVID. Australia would have a successful Sovereign Borders policy; having embarked on sensible net zero carbon policies; not Snowy 2.0 – almost 10 years ahead of where it is, today. Preparing to meet the challenges of the mid-2020s – not the mid-2030s.

Prime Minister Morrison's AUKUS – as significant as QUAD 2.0, in causing a Chinese strategic pause – may have occurred earlier. Resulting in a risk-based decommissioning of the *Collins-class* and transition to nuclear, HMAS AUKUS (SSN 235). As advocated by the NLA and numerous articles in *The NAVY*. [4-6, 21, 25, 27, 22, 39-41, 43, 46, 47]

Fitness to Manage

Referring to Dr Baird [1-6], Hugh Bagehot (*The NAVY*, Vol. 84, No. 2, Apr-Jun 2022, pp. 8-12) posited that CASG needs “an ethical clean-out”. Recognising Australia's ability to equip and sustain the ADF is at stake, he argued for:

- Hiring the right people to establish a class of career-based professionals with the aim of generating a highly skilled workforce;
- A “corporatized” CASG enterprise – as an entirely separate entity from Defence;
- “Root & branch” reform of ASDEFCON to ensure a more practical, and less onerous relationship, based on FIDIC and Australian Standards (AS).

Selection of the Fittest?

The position Australia finds itself in could be due more to the fitness of the CIC and its polity, than any other factor. Raising several questions:

- Is Canberra Group Think more conscious, than unconscious?
- Is the CIC representative of Australia, as a whole?
- Can CIC thinking be represented impartially?
- Was the ejection of Abbott, as much about his own party, as a reaction by the CIC?
- Can promotions and selection of leaders (including in Defence, CSIRO, DSTG, and the APS) be based reliably on merit, in such an admixture?

For every APS in Defence, there are two consultants (16,000: 32,000); there are more APS / Consultants than the RAN and RAAF combined; and for a Dollar spent on APS-Contractors, about 75 cents is spent on ADF personnel. Noting creatures use tails foremost for balancing, not wagging:

- does the CIC provide value for money?
- Could an outsider, an Essington Lewis (SA), John Monash (VIC), or Thomas Blamey (NSW), be anointed today by the CIC?

Few change leaders may be found in the CIC. Which raises questions about its fitness to lead, select, and create the impetus for *adaptive change* and brevet selection.

POLITICAL CONTEXT

The Government may struggle to marry expensive policies, including domestically on Aged Care, NDIS (\$35.8B a year) and *Renewable* (Carbon net-zero by 2035, Snowy 2.0, etc.), with:

- economic and fiscal requirements to tackle inflation;
- Industrial Relations;
- Energy Security (domestic and international);
- base-load reliability and affordability;
- Human Rights vis *Operation Sovereign Borders*.

[Navy deployed north in early 2023, following the “granting of permanent residency to 19,000 people who arrived by boat”].

- The referendum on an *Indigenous Voice to Parliament*.
- The failure of inter-generational Indigenous policies to address the breakdown of and law and order in remote Australian communities (attributed, in part, to the removal of cashless credit cards / alcohol ban). Contributing to:
 - “A death rate due to external causes of injury for Indigenous children, more than 3 times the rate for non-Indigenous children.
 - Sexual assaults among Indigenous children aged up to nine, 4 times higher than rates among non-Indigenous children.
 - Indigenous young people aged ten to seventeen, 17 times as likely to be under youth justice supervision, as non-Indigenous young people.
 - Indigenous females and males nearly 10 and 9 times more likely to die due to assault as non-Indigenous females and males, respectively”. [50]
 - Indigenous Australian adults 32 and females 52 times more likely to be hospitalised from family violence, than non-Indigenous Australians. [51]

ECONOMIC CONTEXT

The world is recovering from the 2019-2022 COVID pandemic, inflation, bank runs, and rising energy costs, exacerbated by:

- Putin's war on Ukraine;
- the rapid expansion of imported *Renewable* technology (including new poles and cables), necessary to achieve net-Zero by 2035;
- closure of multiple *Reliable* coal, oil, gas, [nuclear] (COGN) base-load energy power stations;
- resource taxes / capping of energy prices / local gas exploration;
- changes to IR regulations;

Projections suggest that inflation may peak around 8.4% but could remain above 6.0% for some time. Interest rates are lagging, as the RBA tempers monetary responsibilities against international rates, the dollar, unemployment, bank runs, and political appetite. On this basis:

- Interest may peak at or above 6.0% – but could go higher, if inflation remains above 5%;
- A *high-employment* (inflationary) **Technical Recession**. may occur toward the end of 2023.
- The AUD may go below \$0.62 to the USD and settle around \$0.67 – as U.S. Interest rates increase more aggressively.
- Recovery is unlikely to be fully underway until 2026. When inflation and interest rates may be at or above 3.5%, and 5.5%, respectively.

The next Federal Election (possibly late 2024) is likely to be held before recovery, when Inflation and Interest rates could be above 5% and productivity remains stagnant. A recipe for a Zombie economy, where failed organisations are kept alive through Government largesse and selecting winners.

INDUSTRIAL CONTEXT

Traditionally, Australian Industry relied upon cheap, reliable energy and distribution to provide for comparative advantage against other industrialised economies. [49] Despite changes to IR regulations by the Hawke-Keating government, labour costs are uncompetitive. They are likely to become less so as IR changes impact productivity and collective negotiation in an inflationary, recessive economy, as AI gains traction. Warned of by the RBA.

Scientifically, economically, and environmentally

At some stage, the Government will need to address the apparent industrial, environmental, economic, and scientific contradiction of John Howard's *Commonwealth, Environment, Protection*,

and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999 (prohibiting nuclear power generation in s.140A), with respect to AUKUS, nuclear-powered submarines, enriching, reprocessing, and producing nuclear fuel. Excluded under AUKUS.

Environmentally, industrially, and domestically, Australia is better placed than almost any other nation to make use of *small modular reactors* (SMR). To substantially reduce carbon footprint / poles and cables / wind farms, in remote locations, and provide for reliable base load. Restoring comparative advantage, [49] in terms of energy costs; enabling technological innovation; security of supply – and improved productivity. Through assured reliability.

By mining and refining iron and bauxite in Australia, at competitive, locally produced, reliable COG[N] energy prices – and exporting in Australian registered ships – Australia would substantially reduce China's (dirty) steel / aluminium Carbon and transportation footprint. By between 5-to-10 fold, per tonne of ore. A much more significant, less costly global Carbon reduction, than Australia's economy and industry damaging 2035 net-zero policies. At the same time, supporting traditional energy-heavy industries, such as shipbuilding, aviation, and weapons manufacturing. All essential to Deterrence, supporting our allies, and re-armament.

Cyber, Energy and Space

Australia could become the cyber, energy, [food], and space hub of the southern hemisphere, by privately capitalising:

1. An orbital maritime HS2C connecting all Australian capitals – the *Flinders Cable*;

2. Supporting the construction of a southern-hemisphere maritime cables, comprising:

- A. **The South Pacific HS2C**, Chile, South America, French Polynesia, New Zealand, Fiji and Australia;
- B. **The Indian Ocean HS2C** Perth, Cocos Island, Diego Garcia, Mumbai, India, Mauritius, Kenya, Seychelles, Madagascar; Reunion and South Africa;
- C. **The South Atlantic HS2C** Falkland Islands, Latin America, via Punta Arenas, to the South Pacific SH2C; Las Toninas; St Helena; Cape Town; Ascension Island; Cape Verde; Azores, UK;
- D. **The Antarctic HS2C** connecting Tasmania, to the Antarctic Bases via East and West about links to the Falklands and Latin America.

Cyber, Energy and Space are all interlinked. Darwin lends itself as the the cyber-energy (and food) hub of southern, South East Asia and Oceania. Providing a regional energy, and cyber hub. Including secure terrestrial support for space exploration.

Universities

Australia no longer has public but commodified universities. Nowhere is this more the case than in STEM. Where up to 80% of academics, and 90% of PhD candidates come from abroad. At least half of them from countries unlikely to gain security clearances.

The fallacy that, as constituted, universities could currently undertake sensitive research represents a risk. Or that DSTG could become a DARPA, with 99% of its scientists contracted out to labs and universities.

Australian Shipping

The Prime Minister, as Minister for Infrastructure and Transport in 2011, stated:

It makes no sense, no sense at all for Australian trading to take place almost entirely in the hulls of foreign ships.

- We need to become participants, not just customers.
- We need to upgrade the fleet.
- We need to get the regulatory framework right.
- We need a “best in class” tax system for shipping.
- And we need a pool of skilled seafarers to operate the ships of the future.

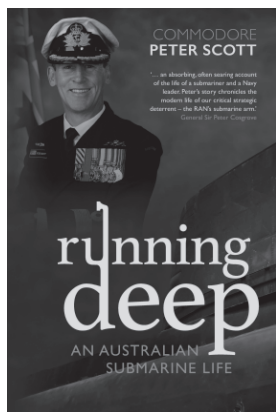
These reforms will confirm Australia's long term economic, environmental and security objectives. [42]

In 12 years, despite the fine words by politicians of both parties – reported in *The NAVY, Red Duster* – the Australia's Strategic Merchant Fleet has gone backwards. There is no indication that the *Strategic Maritime Fleet Task Force* with its CIC leadership, will achieve more. Other than to cost Australia valuable time and the Tax Payer millions of dollars. That would have been better spent building ships, on Australian Navy Cadets, naval architects, and proper maritime colleges. ■



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RUNNING DEEP

An Australian Submarine Life

By Commodore Peter Scott CSC RAN

Fremantle Press (4 April 2023)

ISBN: 9781760992002

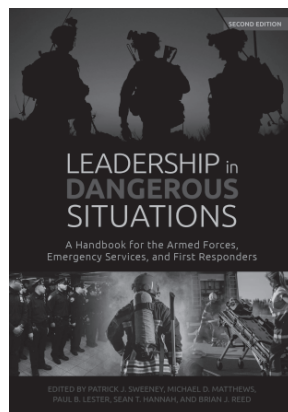
Paperback: \$30.00

This exceptional and surprising book should be the top of the list for sitting beside the fire, during the winter months. And richly imbibing. Many of us will have worked alongside, or with Peter, during his three decades and more in the service of our country, and that of the most silent of services: the Royal Australian Navy's Submarine Service. Those of us who have worked with the author, know a humble, enquiring, dedicated man. Calm in a crisis, thoughtful and searching – providing leadership and action, this day – as circumstances demand. For all that, many of us will be surprised by the nautical miles covered by Peter, both while at sea, and ashore – in the service of his country. Each year and month taking their toll, on loved ones – without whom, we could not serve. There is no compensation for separation.

The surprising aspect is that the book was allowed to be published. Good on Navy and Defence. For it touches upon the life and experience of our submarine service, across the world. In times of hot peace and cold war – when our submarines have always been the tip of the spear. And will continue to be so. With a forward by the Governor General (with whom the author served, as his MA) and recommendations by General, Sir Peter Cosgrove and Kim Beazley – the book could hardly ask for a better pedigree.

On the one hand, a series of “war stories”, in the best tradition of humble observer and participator; leader and servant. On the other, a love story, for the Submarine Service, Australia, the RAN and above all family. As a submariner, more perhaps than a pilot, one is dealing daily with the existential. Where one small mistake by any member of the crew, defines the line between buoyancy and survival. The team becomes very close – as those who have fought will recall. The leadership demanded of a submariner, is therefore second to none. For the stories – buy the book!

Scotty's last chapter deals with transition to civilian life, and home. Dealing with past memories, and the crocodiles living beneath murky waters of the mind. A haunting allegory, that touches all servicemen and women. Thank you, Peter. You have done your Country and Service, great Service.



LEADERSHIP IN DANGEROUS SITUATIONS, SECOND EDITION

A Handbook for the Armed Forces, Emergency Services and First Responders

Edited by Patrick D. Sweeney, Michael D. Matthews, Paul B. Lester, Sean T. Hannah, and Brian J. Reed

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The US Armed Forces often do things exceptionally – particularly when it comes to addressing and delivering scenario-based leadership education. This book stands – providing a guide “which, for years, has prepared military, emergency, and first responders to face psychological, social, and physical challenges of leading in dangerous contexts.” Its final chapter identifies that:

leading in dangerous contexts is a demanding and ever-evolving process because we operate in volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environments. Every operation is different, and we sometimes find ourselves in situations we have not trained for (e.g., airplanes used as bombs in a terrorist attack, standing up a country after its army is defeated, leading a response to a pandemic). Leaders who operate in dangerous contexts need to be open to adaptation and creative in solving unexpected challenges. Cultivating a learning mindset and empowering followers to share their ideas and exercise disciplined initiative enhances the ability of an organisation to adapt.

As leaders, we have a responsibility to learn and to adapt, and to prepare the next generation to serve. As the author's observe “people attracted to dangerous-context organisations tend to have personal values that align with the organisation's values, so service tends to be part of their individual purpose.” Thus, we have “the privilege of leading and working with good people”, and being their servants. A good guide and read, for building future leaders of the ADF.



HATCH: ROKS-CHUNG-NAM (FFG828) South Korea's first Batch III Chungnamham-class Frigate, launched April 2023.



MATCH: USS SANTA BARBARA (LCS32) Commissioned at Naval Station Ventura County April 2023.



DESPATCH: HMS MONTROSE (F236) Decommissioned April 2023.