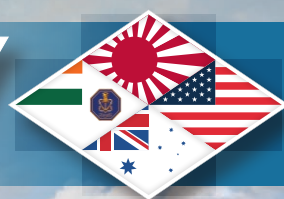


# THE NAVY

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA

**CONTEST FOR THE  
SOUTHERN OCEAN**



**DSR AND  
SURFACE  
FLEET  
REVIEW**

**DEATH BY A THOUSAND  
REVIEWS – A LETHAL RAN?**

**BACK TO THE FUTURE  
THE NEED TO RE-CREATE  
THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN  
FLEET AUXILIARY**

**A HISTORY OF  
AUSTRALIAN NAVAL  
SHIPBUILDING, 1911-1948**



IN MEMORY OF  
ELIZABETH SYKES

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**Front cover:** *Hunter-Class* Frigate (Image RAN). Paying for Corvettes by 'robbing Peter to pay Paul' with funds from the *Hunter* project?

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By NLA Defence Analysts

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### All letters and contributions to:

The Office of The Editor

*THE NAVY*

Navy League of Australia

GPO Box 1719

Sydney, NSW 2001

E-mail to: editorthenavy@hotmail.com

All Subscriptions, Membership and Advertising enquiries to:

The Hon Secretary

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GPO Box 1719, Sydney NSW 2001

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## Deterrence is to trust, as trust is to competence.

This is a sombre issue of *The NAVY*, potentially marking a point of no return regarding the current Government's Defence posture with Allies and competitors, alike. There has been significant correspondence regarding the NLA / *The NAVY* assessment of the *Smith-Houston Defence Strategic Review* (DSR) – with many Defence analysts and Industry leaders becoming increasingly alarmed. [1] The four papers in this issue, pick up in part or full the critique of the DSR – raising concerns about the long-term impact upon the Economy, Defence, and Regional Relations. Including with critical Allies in the QUAD (Japan, India, and U.S.), AUKUS (U.S. and UK), Five Eyes (CA, NZ, U.S. and UK), FPDA, and key partners in ASEAN (including Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines), the TPP (Japan, Vietnam, Mexico, Singapore and Canada), NATO *Indo-Pac* partners (France, Canada, U.S., and UK), and the Pacific Family / Pacific Island Forum.

The first paper by long-term NZ contributor Murray Dear (Essay competition, Non-Professional entry, Third Prize) examines the ongoing Contest for the Southern Ocean. The NLA and *The NAVY* have consistently raised concerns about Chinese encroachment into Antarctica and Australian, NZ, and British Territories. Seemingly, placing egregious and unlawful demands on Antarctica, as per the South China Sea. Murray concludes:

Should such policing [of Chinese Fishing Operations] result in an aggressive Chinese response (which seems likely)...or the annexation of their Inexpressible Island base in Ross Sea [NZ Antarctic Territory], then New Zealand, with United States and Australian support, may need to consider mounting a "South Thule" type operation, which would surely bring armed conflict to the "White Continent."

The second paper is by long-standing Federal Vice President and Senior Defence Analyst, Mr Mark Schweikert. Mark tackles Admirals Hilarides and Mayer *Surface Fleet Review* (SFR); concluding, inter alia:

...the Minister has already hinted at major shakeup of the surface fleet...From the Ministers statements on the DSR one could easily suspect that Government has already made its mind up and potentially using the review, through its unpublished terms of reference, to justify a pre-conceived acquisition strategy for Corvettes. Paying for it by 'robbing Peter to pay Paul' with funds from the *Hunter* project.

The third paper by another long-standing contributor and maritime expert, Greg Swinden (Essay competition, Professional entry, Third Prize), in *Back to the Future* examines the need for a Royal Australian Fleet Auxiliary. Something the NLA and *The NAVY* have been calling on for decades. Greg notes:

There will be many nay-sayers who will come up with every possible reason why the RAFA concept will not work – but if the British and US governments can make it work, then why can't Australia?

In the final paper of this issue, Dr Neil Baird in the first of two articles, examines Australian Naval Shipbuilding between 1911 and 1948 (covering both World Wars). In his second paper, Neil looks at the period from 1949 to 2023. His detailed analysis by ships and class over both periods, represents a significant contribution. Dr Baird concludes ominously:

Given that very chequered history, it is obvious that the RAN has had very serious problems with its peacetime warship acquisition processes. The Commonwealth government is very well aware of Navy's continuing flow of catastrophic decisions. Successive governments, especially since World War 2, have promised to improve its acquisition processes but they never have. So, what is to be done about it?

### Let them Hate, for so Long as they Fear (Caligula, 12-41 AD)

This editorial considers "Deterrence, Trust, and Competence," regarding Australia's emerging Defence posture and International Relations. The quote attributed to Gaius Caligula suggests that the obverse of trust may be hate and fearful compliance. Increasingly unpopular, U.S. / Western domestic and foreign policy may be significantly dividing the seventy or so Democratic nations, from the 130 "other" UN nations. Giving the *No Limits Axis* (NOLA) – led by China, Russia and Iran, incorporating the BRICS (Brazil, India, and South Africa) and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) – a free hand. Paraphrasing a discussion between Fred M'membe, and Kyeretwie Opoku [2] on the "West in Africa":

When the Chinese come, we get a hospital. When the Westerners come, we get a lecture.

M'membe – noting the "largest Drone Base in the world in Niger sits alongside a uranium mine supplying 1/3 of France's Electricity supply" – concluded: "Western (U.S. and EU) interests are concerned more about protecting strategic minerals from China, than investing in Africa". The point M'membe and Opoku underlined is threefold:

1. African nations are increasingly likely to trust China, meaning;
2. they can afford to hate the U.S., UK, and EU due to long-term "no string's infrastructure investment" by China and, so;
3. no longer fear.

In simple terms, the U.S. (and EU) is not feared nor, more worryingly, trusted. Without fear or trust, there is no, or limited Deterrence. Without demonstrable competence – in Defence, Security, and International Relations – what is there to be fearful about and what can be deterred? Following Lord Ismay's advice on the establishment of NATO in 1949, the Global West has singularly:

failed to keep the Chinese (and Russians) off side; the Global West in, and African and other nations (including in SE Asia, the Pacific Rim, and Latin America), on side.

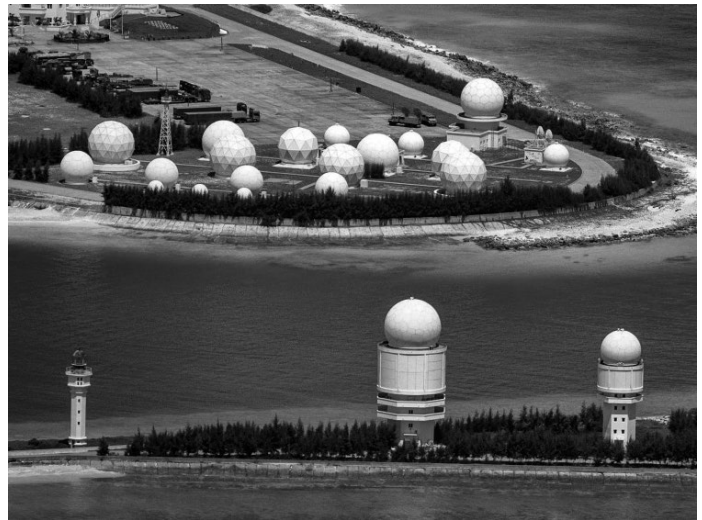


China's research icebreaker PLAN XUELONG (Snow Dragon), Operating in Antarctica.

## Trust is to competence

Undermining what trusts there are, is the competence being demonstrated by many Western Governments. What is there to trust, when many of their institutions are under attack – as much from within, as without? When democratically elected Governments – including in Australia (WA and Victoria – as permitted by the Federal Government) – can impose as drastic Covid lockdowns, border closures, and restrictions, as imposed by communist China? When the state, media, and judiciary can imprison a respected religious leader, or apparently exploit political-media motivated charges to persecute (rather than prosecute) an alleged assault case? Allegations that possibly influenced a Federal election result? Where, despite the *Lawyer X* scandal that exposed Victorian judicial, executive (political), and enforcement organs, few if any heads have fallen? When Australia Day, the Australian Flag, Head of State, and Governor General, are all undermined by political-media elites. With the AWM and even ANZAC Day, now in their sights? At the same time, investing in what may be a bitterly divisive referendum. Its design and purpose, tragically appearing more likely to divide, than unite.

What confidence is there when an acclaimed *Defence Strategic Review* – supposedly acting to strengthen Defence in the critical 2025-2027 timeframe – in actuality, rips its heart out? [1] As outlined in this issue's DSR and *Surface Fleet Review* analysis, see *Flash Traffic*, pp 16-21. When the Australian Naval Institute (ANI) publishes a soft article; at the same time accepting advertising from the defunct *Naval Shipbuilding Institute* and the façade that was its *Naval Shipbuilding College*. Even after concerns were loyally raised by RINA, the NLA and *The NAVY*. At no time offering apology or explanation. Nor addressing what an in-house Defence publishing arm is doing accepting advertising, and promoting self-serving articles in the first place? Leaving critical, loyally dissenting, trustworthy articles to appear in *The NAVY*. While advertising continues to go the ANI – to charm the Canberra Industrial Complex elites? When a Chief of Defence Force and then Chief of Army, should so clearly have resigned on the release of the *Brereton Report*. In accordance with International Law and the Geneva Conventions. Disgracefully, having to be referred to the ICC by Senator Jacqui Lambie. But stayed on, with the blessing of the self-same political-media elites. Instead of honourably lancing the boil and allowing Defence to move on. By staying, doing untold damage to reputation. So, preventing a new generation of thinking, fighting, winning, officers to come forward. Better trusted to advise and prevent the unfolding disaster that is the *DSR* (and the *SFR* may become), from being inflicted on Commonwealth, Country, and Defence. Also denying Navy its first CDF, in over two decades.



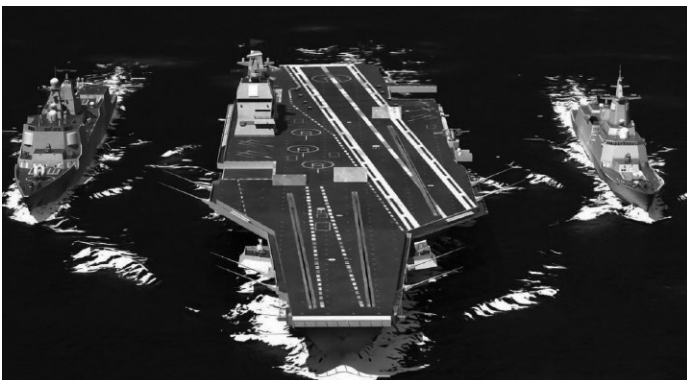
When Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPS), have failed to deter China (Image Fiery Cross Reef).

Internationally, the incompetent disaster that became Biden's Afghanistan bugout, followed by his incredulous January 2022 comments signalling to Russia that a "minor incursion" into Ukraine might be "dependent," further damaged trusts. When Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPS), have failed to deter China in the South China Sea and on Taiwan.

It is much worse than in the 1970s, when the U.S. had within it the capacity and rigour to lead a strategic rebuild. Able to economically defeat the USSR by 1991. It is uncertain today, that the U.S. can morally recover – and rearm domestically and internationally. As testified by its moribund shipbuilding industry, and the increasing return to Gold to offset a potential collapse of the US Dollar. A collapse being metricated by the *No Limits Axis*, with its allies in the Middle East, Latin America, and Africa. Including, due to exceptionally competent strategic Chinese statecraft, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

It should be no surprise that recruitment is falling in many Western countries. What is there to belong to, or fight for – when *identitism* is willfully portraying patriotism, as nationalism, while training budgets are cut? When the Australian Flag and the Australian White Ensign (Navy's Colours), are no longer allowed to belong to all our people, and Navy?

And yet, and yet. The spirit that is, was, and always will be Australia – our Commonwealth, as vested in its higher values, will come forward. As being seen, in a remarkable Generation – the *Millennials* (b. 1990-2004) – that, through adversity, may be emerging. To rebuild and reconstitute the flame of democracy. With Navy, eternally its safeguard and vanguard. ■



Chinese nuclear-powered aircraft carrier design Concept 04 (image DefenceTalk, Asia Times).

## REFERENCES

- [1] NLA-Defence-Analysts, *Flash Traffic: Analysis of 2023 Australian Defence Strategic Review (DSR)*. *The NAVY* - Journal of the Navy League of Australia, 2023. Vol 85, Iss 2, May-Jun: p. 16-22.
- [2] *When the West visits Africa, they talk about China*. - YouTube, accessed Jun 2023.

# 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.



Our winter edition of *The NAVY* magazine is in your hands and we trust you will enjoy reading and commenting on it as we steam through these colder months into warmer climes.

This edition comes rather hot on the heels of the last one, which we delayed to include commentary on the *Defence Strategic Review*. There is more about that in this edition and on the Surface Fleet Review. There is also much talk in broader Defence circles on the subject. If you have got a view, we would love to include it in a future edition, so please let us know.

As always, there are some great papers in store for you, including from our Navy League of Australia Maritime Affairs Essay Competition prize winners Murray Dear and Greg Swinden, from NSW-based maritime author and publisher Dr Neil Baird of international acclaim, and from the Federal Vice-President of The Navy League of Australia, Mark Schweikert a leading thinker on strategic Defence issues.

I am confident you will enjoy reading each of them. Let us know your thoughts on any or all of the articles – we love to receive your feedback.



The Brereton Report - "junior soldiers have been thrown under the bus, while those responsible for the culture of the ADF are getting away Scot free."

## BRERETON REPORT AND THE ADF LEADERSHIP RESPONSE

Many readers have commented on issues arising from the 2020 *Inspector-General of the ADF Afghanistan Inquiry report* (most widely known as the *Brereton Report*).

Much publicity has been generated in media reporting around a number of these incidents and *The NAVY* and *The Navy League of Australia* denounce all unlawful actions undertaken by members of our military, whether in a deployed theatre of combat or otherwise.

You will know that the *Brereton Report* refers to the existence of credible information of 23 incidents of unlawful killing of one or more non-combatants, by, or at the direction of, Australian Special Forces. These incidents may constitute war crimes, including that of murder. We deplore that and call on all those so accused to be dealt with expeditiously by the appropriate criminal proceedings, with all its checks and balances. What we do not promote, is that individual members of the ADF, current or past, be pre-conceived as guilty by a contemporary, user-driven, media environment.

Many of our members have also noted receiving unsolicited opinions from the broader community on this issue. All of the reports we have received also deplore the alleged unlawful killings which the credible information contained in the report may establish and which may lead to the war crime of murder.

What is a common thread, though, is that in almost all of the anecdotal reports we have received, there is a feeling that there has been an absence of leadership accountability for these actions. That is, that the senior leaders of the time – including politicians, advocates, and in the Public Service – have been willing to apportion blame at the lowest level, or with the broadest brush-stroke, while having not accepted responsibility for the culture, overuse, and application of Special Forces, that allowed such situations to develop, or did not deter their development.

Put another way by one correspondent, and perhaps more articulately in its simplicity,

the most junior soldiers have been *thrown under the bus*, while those responsible for the culture of the ADF are getting away *scot free*.

*The NAVY* is of the view that those involved, at all levels, should take the appropriate action to demonstrate acceptance of their part, not only in alleged crimes if that is the case, but also in a culture that led to such an *alleged* deplorable set of circumstances developing. While such acceptance may include the oversight and implementation of wide-ranging reforms, it may also be as simple as demonstrating personal contrition in a more apparent way.

As always, there remains opportunity to respond offered by *The NAVY*, should Defence, Government, or politicians wish to set out an alternative position.

## OUR STATEMENT OF POLICY

On the previous page you will see our *Statement of Policy* for the maintenance of the maritime wellbeing of the nation. This statement forms our guiding principles and is reviewed from time-to-time to suit the changing needs of our maritime nation. A review of the *Statement of Policy* is upcoming and we invite you to let us have your thoughts on any areas that you think should be updated, changed, require adaptation to a changing international and regional environment, or have become obsolete.

As well, I encourage you to revisit the *Statement of Policy* to remind yourself of the motivators that *The Navy League of Australia* holds vital to our national wellbeing and the freedom of Australia, as well as those issues we continue to champion, that which we seek to promote, and the strategic thinking behind that position.

Please let us know what you think.



AB Teddy Sheean VC - a deed of rare and noble courage reflecting true character and values (image AWM).



## NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA MARITIME AFFAIRS ESSAY COMPETITION

The Navy League of Australia Annual Maritime Affairs essay competition remains open for submission of papers any time up until 19 August 2023.

Whether you are a seasoned contributor or a first-timer, I encourage you to put pen to paper, to put your thoughts into words for this year's essay competition. There are prizes in cash up to \$1,000 as well as the opportunity to have your article published in a future edition of *The Navy*. Get writing!

Contributions can be submitted on a range of topics including 21st Century Naval Warfare, Australian Naval History, and Australian Industrial and Merchant Navy Maritime Strategy.

Further details are inside the back cover, so get your pens (or keyboards) into action. Winning contributors will be announced in the first 2024 edition of *The NAVY* magazine.

*Good luck!*

## THANKS FOR YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT

By engaging with *The NAVY*, you are doing your part in our intent, to keep 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.

Thanks again to you all for your ongoing commitment.

We encourage you to share your copy of *The NAVY* with a friend, or even better sign them up for a membership as a gift or encourage them to join. They will thank you and they, and our great nation, will be the better for it.

Thanks also, of course, to our wonderful volunteers, including our volunteer editor and editorial team, as well as all others who contribute to making this unique publication such an ongoing success. ■

*Well done and happy reading.*

From: CN Australia (Vice Admiral Mark Hammond AM RAN)  
DTG: 290246Z MAY 2023



### VALE ABLE SEAMAN FRANCIS JOSEPH MCGOVERN OAM

1. It is with great sadness that I inform you of the passing of Francis (Frank) Joseph McGovern, the last surviving crew member of HMAS PERTH I sunk in the Battle of Sunda Strait on 1 March 1942
2. Frank was born in Paddington in 1919 and grew up in Sydney. He joined the Naval Reserve on 30 Aug 1939, along with a group of his mates as the clouds of war darkened ahead of the Second World war. He posted to HMAS WESTRALIA for a short time after initial training, then in Nov 1941 posted to PERTH I; joining his older brother Vincent who was a Stoker on board
3. PERTH I and USS HOUSTON were sunk in a heroic last stand in the Sunda Strait, a night action against a vastly superior Japanese Force. They were outgunned and low on ammunition, operating in support of the short lived

Australian-Britain-Dutch-American Command desperately attempting to interdict advancing Japanese invasion forces. 328 PERTH I sailors were lost that night, including Frank's brother Vincent.

4. Frank was taken prisoner of war (POW) by the Japanese Forces and endured horrific conditions working on the Thai-Burma railway. He was later torpedoed by a US Submarine and sunk a second time while being transported to Japan. Recaptured, Frank would labour as a POW in Japan, on one occasion he walked out of hospital and back to work with a fractured spine to avoid bleeding to death as an involuntary blood donor at the hands of his captors.
5. He and his fellow POWS endured Allied incendiary Air Raids, with Frank at one time being wounded, and they were close enough to see the Flash from the Atomic detonation at Hiroshima. Frank's incredible tale of survival is testament to his resilience and that of his fellow POW.
6. Perhaps Frank's greatest legacy was his work after returning home, providing companionship and support to his fellow PERTH I survivors, in forming the HMAS PERTH and Naval POWS Association, and later through the HMAS PERTH National Association, Frank created a community for fellow survivors to turn to, while setting a steadfast example for later generations of HMAS PERTH Sailors and Navy as a whole. In the 2019 Australian Day Honours he would be awarded The Order of Australia Medal for his service to Veterans and their Families.
7. In an aged where the memories of Global Conflict and Naval warfare grow dim, our Navy must hold the experience and memories of veterans like Frank dearly. The resilience, endurance and fortitude displayed by Frank and his Generation of Sailors in War, and as POW, serve to inspire today's Sailors who may one day face their own grave challenges. With Frank's passing on 24 May 23, we have lost a valued exemplar.
8. Frank's Funeral Service [was held] at 1330 on Thursday 01 Jun 23 at Our Lady of The Sacred Heart Church, Randwick.
9. CN Sends.



## HMAS PERTH (I) MEMORIAL

Commander Jim O'Neill ANC (Rtd) Hon Sec NLWA Division wrote to the President alerting the NLA to Frank's passing, shortly before he died. Jim and his colleagues in WA have been the moving force behind the HMAS PERTH I Memorial. Jim writes:

In 1967 a memorial to HMAS PERTH I was established on the banks of the Swan River in East Fremantle. The memorial was dedicated as a living memorial to the ship and crew and TS PERTH Australian Navy Cadets were given the honour of being the Guardians of the memorial.

In the last two years NLWA have spent over \$200,000 refurbishing the existing memorial. Funding for the final stage has been entirely funded through The HMAS PERTH (I) Foundation INC.

In 2017 the NLWA decided to complete the memorial and to date have raised through grants and sponsorship \$750,000 for the project. Many obstacles have been overcome. It is hopeful that the final stage will be completed late October 2023. Allowing planning for the opening can take place on the 1st of March 2024, the 82nd anniversary of the sinking.

Before 2017, many Australians did not know the story of HMAS PERTH I. Since then, we have widely published HMAS PERTH I and its crew through the media, and in liaison with State and Federal politicians.

Navy have recognised that the memorial will become a reference centre for HMAS PERTH I, II, and III and have transferred relics and memorabilia from PERTH 1 and 2 into the collection at the memorial.

I would encourage anyone who wishes to donate or lend memorabilia and relics from PERTH I to the memorial for a

wider safe environment of display. A further \$50,000 is needed to complete the memorial to a high standard that will become a memorial of national significance. With the completion of the memorial wall and propeller (which was designed from the original type of propeller on PERTH I from archived drawings held at the War Memorial) many direct descendants have visited the memorial from all over Australia.

Donations can be made to the Treasurer HMAS PERTH (I) Memorial Foundation INC, PO Box 735 Fremantle, WA 6959, email [info@hmasperth1memorial.com.au](mailto:info@hmasperth1memorial.com.au), or to BankWest, HMAS PERTH(I) Memorial Foundation INC, BSB 302 162, A/C 1499868.

## THANK YOU: LIEUTENANT COMMANDER DESMOND WOODS OAM RAN

The NAVY and the Navy League of Australia are indebted to Lieutenant Commander Desmond Woods, the Navy Bereavement Liaison Officer, Directorate of Navy Sensitive Issues Management. Desmond contributed significantly to arranging Frank's funeral and writing his Obit, that appeared in the National Press. As used by CN in his signal to the Fleet. Lieutenant Commander Woods joined the Royal New Zealand Navy in 1974, subsequently serving in the Royal Navy, the British Army, and the RAN as an Education Officer, teaching naval and military history to junior officers. He retired from Navy on 12 June, after almost half a century before the mast – in the Service of Crown, Commonwealth and Country. Fair winds in your retirement. Thank you, on behalf of generations of sailors you enriched and served as leader. You set the bar high.

## VALE ELIZABETH SYKES

The NSW Division and the whole of the Navy League in Australia are enormously saddened to record that Liz Sykes has crossed the bar in late June.

Liz has been the Honorary Secretary of the NSW Division for almost 20 years, a member for many years longer than that as well as maintaining the mailing list for the whole of *The Navy's* data base.

On top of all that, Liz has also been the personal assistant of Otto Albert in his working life as well as being the NSW's Division President for more than 30 years.

A few of the many tributes we have received are:

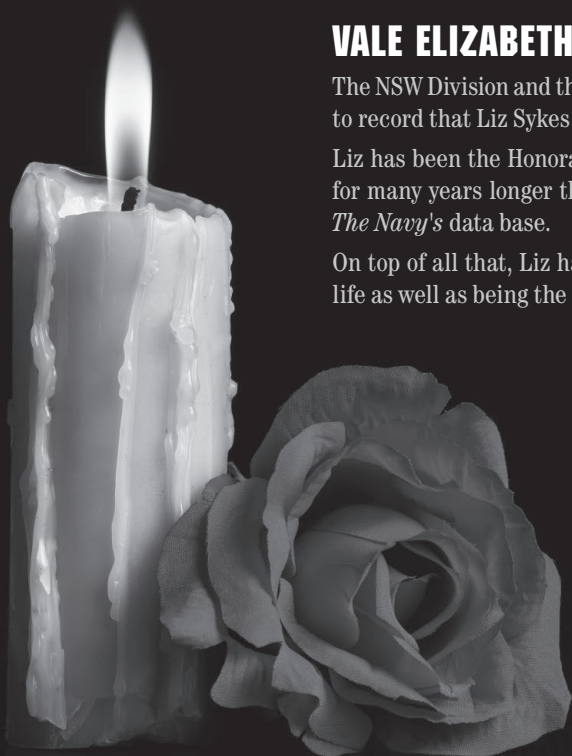
"Friend, colleague and stalwart of the League... she will be sadly missed"

"Extremely bad news; she will be a great loss"

"She has contributed greatly to both the NLA and *The Navy* magazine over many years; always consistently, progressive and supportive."

Liz was a good friend for all of us and will be very sadly missed.

Otto Albert  
NSW President







## DSR UNRAVELS

The *Smith-Houston Defence Security Review (DSR)*, as forecast in *The NAVY DSR Analysis (Flash Traffic, Issue 2, May-Jun 2023)*, is unravelling fast. Creating the very conditions of fear, paralysis, and retrenchment foreseen by *NLA Defence Analysts*. [1] Precisely because there is minimal (*Schumpeterian*) creation, and “maximal optimisation, 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”. [1] All orchestrated by the accountant consultancies, who run Defence.

The *Smith-Houston DSR* failed to:

1. Create an identifiable leadership strategy for the 2035 timeframe, against which planners might plan;
2. Understand Defence as a complex enterprise and that adaptation requires managing both growth and decline;
3. Consequently, disguising growth as optimisation, while cutting Army to pay Navy and mandating yet another review for Navy. Creating the very fissures intended for divide and rule.

The international consultants advising the DSR, appear to be the very same that advised the UK Government during its disastrous

2010 UK *Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR)*. Before the SDSR, there was no so-called *Black Hole*. After the SDSR, there was. The UK Armed Forces have been chasing their tails ever since – while getting progressively smaller, less capable, and adaptive. Before the DSR, there was no Defence *Black Hole*. Now there is a fabricated \$42 Billion Dollar Black hole; “including over \$15B to be clawed back over the next decade” (2023-2032). At the same time, increases in Defence spending are frozen for the next four years, and will only increase afterwards, in the forward estimate “by 5-6% to a target under 2.4% of GDP”. [1]

The situation is worse than feared. Hence the palpable fear stalking Russell, as every program grinds to a halt to find non-existent savings, “apparently hanging around like low hanging fruit.” As example, contractors are no longer being hired – for several reasons, including the PwC scandal. These jobs are supposedly to be filled by APS. But there is no appetite for APS recruiting, or trained APS available – while gapping acts as an unofficial cut, or “saving.” So, people do not get hired, things do not get done, Defence training is slashed, and everything grinds to a halt. Essential travel to build contingent trusts is cancelled, because “everything can now be done virtually, from

home.” Representing another saving, given *hot-desking* is now the norm. Government offices are deliberately being reconfigured at 67% capacity – as advised by the very same accountancy consultants who created the open-plan mess in the first place. In other words, 1/3 of the staff at any time will not have a desk. If everyone came into work, there would be nowhere to go. One step from downsizing (sacking and, or famine). Brutal *von-Neumann* turnpike change-management, at its worst.

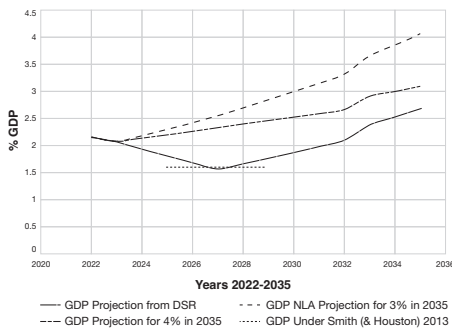
## DEFENCE ECONOMICS 101

To *simply* explain to Government, Smith, Houston (and Dean) – the fabricated *Black Hole* requires real cost savings (cuts) in the order of 4% of the Defence budget, per annum for the next decade. To 2032. At the same time – during a period of high inflation – increases in the Defence Budget have been frozen until after the forward estimates. When a future Government is expected to increase defence spending between 5-6% per annum. The combined impact (cuts, freezing, and inflation) mean that, in real terms, the percentage of GDP spent on Defence is likely to reduce to about 1.6% (from around 2.1 to 2.2% in 2022). This should be familiar territory for both Smith and Houston, as they were both on watch (or just coming off), the last time Defence spending reached these levels, in 2013. The lowest level of Defence spending on GDP by any Australian Government, since WW2.



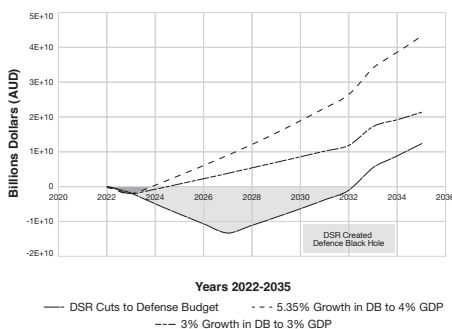
More Casuistry - 5 or 8 AUKUS SSN Submarines?





## Real Impact of Cuts, Freezing, and Inflation on Defence GDP, 2022-2035

In real terms, around \$40Billion will have been removed from the Defence Budget in the first four years, at about \$9-10B a year – peaking in 2028. Exactly as intended. In GDP terms, the Defence Budget will not recover to its 2022/3 level until 2032/3. Even then, to a target “under or about 2.4% GDP – which is essentially a training and exercise [i.e., not a war thinking, fighting, and winning] capability budget.” [1]



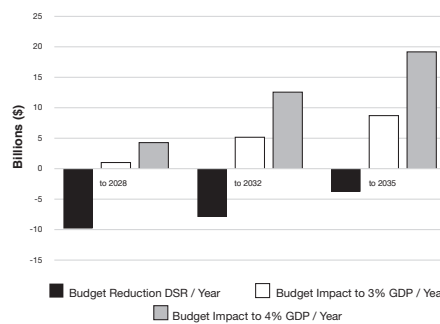
**Fig 2 The DSR Fabricated Defence Black Hole**

If the Government had understood Defence, Defence economics, or “defence budgeting for change,” it would have continued to increase Defence Spending at 3% per annum. This would have allowed for a brief dip between 2022 and 2024, before recovering to about 2.7% in 2032 and 3% in 2035 – as recommending by the NLA (see *Statement of Policy*, p. 5). Recommendations by NLA Defence Analysts, [1] to increase Defence spending to 4% of GDP by 2035, requires increasing the Defence budget by 5.35% per annum. Even allowing for cuts, after a smaller dip, this would have led to about 3.3% of GDP by 2032, and 4% of GDP in 2035.

## RIPPING THE HEART OUT

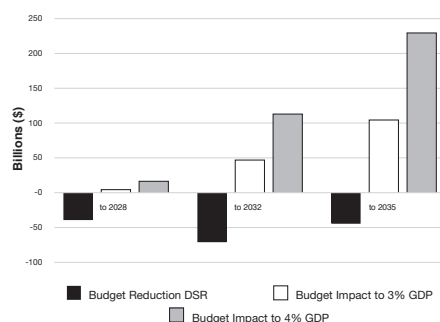
The impact in real dollar terms is to rip the heart out of the ADF, catastrophically at a time of urgent change and growth in the size and scale of the Defence Force. All requiring real investment in change. The effect on the Defence Budget of cuts (to 2032), freezing (to 2028) and inflation, is shown by the size of the fabricated *Smith-Houston Black Hole*. The DSR Defence Budget will not have

recovered from the compound impacts of all three effects (cuts, freezing, and inflation), by 2035.



## DSR Budget Reductions per Year, to 2028, 2032, and 2035

In real terms, the *Smith-Houston Defence Budget* removes from the Budget \$45-55B by 2035, and over \$70B by 2032 (allowing for growth at 5 or 6% from 2028). While the cuts in the forward estimates over the next decade may have filled the fabricated \$42B *Smith-Houston Black Hole* by 2029, the real impact is much, much worse, and prolonged. Cuts of this nature are very hard to arrest once the reductionist mentality takes hold. Overshoots are inevitable, if not unstoppable. In actuality, the Defence Budget, as currently projected, will not have dug itself out of the *self-fabricating Black Hole* by 2035. In real terms, between 2023 and 2027, the *Smith-Houston Defence Budget* reduces Defence spending by almost \$10B a year; between 2028 and 2032, by \$8B a year. Even by 2035, reducing Defence spending by \$3-5B a year over the next 12 years. In other words, Defence will not have recovered from the self-immolation caused by the DSR in 2023, by 2035. It will certainly not be in any shape to respond to the years of peak threat (2025-2027), that it was intended to address – and / or to deliver on AUKUS. Be it for three *Virginia-class* SSNs in the early 2030s, and 8 *AUKUS-class* submarines to be built in Australia. Or variations of that theme.



## Overall DSR Budget Reductions, to 2028, 2032, and 2035

## KNOWN OR SHOULD HAVE KNOWN

It was reportedly General Campbell's view as CDF, in 2018/19:

...that [acting] retrospectivity in such awards [e.g., for Teddy Sheean VC] could open the floodgates to others and might upset the Queen [adding gratuitously] that the recommendation was rejected by a raft of naval community figures and military historians.

Readers will recall that William Alston in his piece “It is Time: RAN VC” [2] also warned of retrospective action to remove VCs, or to tie or conflate the award to Teddy Sheean's long-deserved award of the VC, with the removal of a VC, and changes of letters patent. Changes of letters patent that would go against Royal decree and the express wishes of King George V. [2] Notwithstanding, the Morrison Government did both – leading, amongst other things, to the pre-judging of civil cases, before criminal charges had been brought. Also confusing the valour of the man and the deed at that instance, with the moral character of the individual.

General Angus Campbell, following the release of the *Brereton Report*, went on to demand the removal of honours and citations of those units similarly implicated, before trial. This had to be countermanded by the then Minister of Defence, Mr Peter Dutton. On the change of Government and result of a recent civil (not criminal) court case, General Angus Campbell is again visiting the removal of awards and citations, from members of the Defence Force. A directive possibly being entertained by the current Minister of Defence, and Deputy Prime Minister. Thereby continuing to confuse the deed at that instance, with moral character (his and others). It was King George V's view that even a condemned man, should go to his execution still wearing his VC.

It should not have taken Corporal Senator Jacqui Lambie's referral to the International Criminal Court, for General Angus Campbell to know that the *Geneva Conventions, Article 87 of the 1977 Additional Protocol I* provide:

1. The High Contracting Parties and the Parties to the conflict shall require military commanders, with respect to members of the armed forces under their command and other persons under their control, to prevent and, where necessary, to suppress and report to competent authorities breaches of the Conventions and of this Protocol.

Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), Geneva, 8 June 1977, Article 87. Article 87 was adopted by consensus. CDDH, Official Records, Vol. VI, CDDH/SR.45, 30 May 1977, p. 307.



While, *Working Group A of Committee I, adopted draft Article 76(2) of the Additional Protocol I with the following wording:*

The fact that a breach of the Conventions or of the present Protocol was committed by a subordinate does not absolve his superiors from penal or disciplinary responsibility as the case may be, if they knew or had the possibility of knowing in the circumstances at the time that he was committing or was going to commit such a breach and if they did not take all feasible measures within their power to prevent or repress the breach.

CDDH, Official Records, Vol. X, CDDH/I/321/Rev.1, 21 April–11 June 1976, p. 153. (After the meetings some delegations informed the Chairman of Committee I that they wished to have the words “or had possibility of knowing” replaced by the words “or had information on the basis of which he should have concluded”.)

Although the wording has been *recklessly* changed and obfuscated in the Commonwealth Criminal Code (1995, s 268.115 at 2, a. through c) for military commanders – when compared to similar Allied coding – the same intent applies. Senior Officers are not absolved from disciplinary action if “they knew or had the possibility of knowing in the circumstances at the time that he was committing or was going to commit such a breach and if they did not take all feasible measures within their power to prevent or repress the breach.” This applies to General Angus Campbell, and other senior Army Officers “who [irrespective of *recklessness*] knew or should have known” – yet were positively removed from consideration under the *Brereton Report*. A report established by General Angus Campbell, other senior Army officers, under an Army General (Brereton), supported by senior Australian Public Servants.

General Campbell's June 2023 leaked claim that he tried to return his DSC, on the release of the *Brereton Report*, and that this was rejected by the then Prime Minister Scott Morrison, shows lack of grace. The PM is not the Commander in Chief. Only the Governor General, acting as Commander in Chief, could have accepted the return of a DSC. As a soldier, the Governor General would have also known that, not confusing deed with moral character, the return of the medal would not be permissible, without accepting General Campbell's resignation. Which, almost certainly, the Governor General would have honourably accepted.

General Campbell knew or should have been expected to know this. The only honourable option that CDF and then Chief of Army could and should have taken was to resign. The fact that they did not and continue to stay, has further damaged Army and ADF standing. Transferring yet more power to the

media and political elites, and the Canberra Industrial Complex. Of which CDF, through his actions – appears clearly a part.

## CHANGE LEADERSHIP

Change requires leadership – it is not managed. Without leadership, the fearful conditions created by the *Smith-Houston DSR* will freeze change. People will become understandably fearful of doing anything other than sitting tight and protecting the furniture – in so much as they can. Because the budget is being cut in real terms by up to 10% per annum, for the next 14 years – the debilitating and destabilising effects will go much further. From a political, industrial, environmental, and policy perspective, elements of the Labor Party are already resisting AUKUS; including nuclear powered propulsion. As vested in Howard's absurd Pandora legislation: *The Commonwealth, Environment, Protection, and Biodiversity Conservation Act*, 1999 (in s.1404).

General Campbell should have honourably resigned with the then Chief of Army, on the announcement and findings of the *Brereton Report*. That would have significantly lanced the boil. His next opportunity came when Peter Dutton as Defence Minister rescinded his order removing awards and citations from over 3000 ADF personnel, incriminated or otherwise in the *Brereton Report*. General Angus Campbell was then extended as CDF to see through the *Defence Security Review* and the implementation of the *Brereton Report*, also playing out in the courts. His position was by then more by political “grace and favour” – exactly where a CDF should never be. The findings of the recent civil case and the continuing questions being raised of and about the *Brereton Report* and his leadership, should have caused General Campbell to consider his extension as CDF.

The handling of the *Smith-Houston DSR* and the knowledge “CDF knew or should have known” about the scale and impact of the DSR on the ADF (as outlined) and the Army, in particular, was General Campbell's last opportunity to resign with honour. Tragically, Campbell may now become known more for what he failed to honourably do, than any of his now besmirched successes.

Noting that change is led and leadership is, first and foremost, about trust – CDF and several other senior Army officers are probably not the people to carry the ADF into the 21st Century. To represent the ADF to the political elites, the Canberra Industrial Complex (CIC), and lead with trust and honour. In the words of Lieutenant General Oliver Cromwell, speaking to the Rump Parliament, on 20 April 1653:

*It is not fit that you should sit here any longer. You have sat here too long for any good you have been doing lately ... In the name of God go.*

## LAUGHING ALL THE WAY TO THE PEOPLE'S BANK OF CHINA

Potentially, one of the key reasons that the CCP has been largely quiescent on the DSR is that, unlike it would appear the Canberra Industrial Complex, they have retained a level of analytical, strategic, political-economic competency – and done their homework. Why protest or add to the flames, when the DSR and the CIC is doing their job for them? As Sun Tzu might have concluded, why deter, the already seemingly deterred:

Deterrence posture and effects are 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. [1]

The Argentines saw the 1980 UK Defence Review's implementation as an opportunity to embark on military operations. Such is the power of defence reviews. [1]

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, does not [the DSR] admit that the Government is unwilling to fund the so-called black hole? [1]

The Central (or People's) Bank of China Defence Analysts, may well have concluded all the above and more. Based upon NLA Defence Analyst's findings, the biggest threat to ADF comes not from outside but from within Canberra. What more could you ask, than a major regional Defence Force committing its own *seppuku* – by unknowingly, or worst case knowingly, substantively reducing Defence spending in real terms (to below 2.1-2.2% of GDP) and removing up to \$70B of Defence spending, over the critical timeframe, 2023-2032? While, concomitantly destroying the morale necessary to foster the types of leadership required to think, fight, and win?

Attributed to Solzhenitsyn in 1975, is an anecdote of Lenin's saying: “when it comes time to hang [Lenin's Useful Idiots], they will sell us the rope.” Now Australian knighthoods are off the table, perhaps the authors of the DSR along with various serving and retired State Premiers, are deserving of the CCP's prestigious *Friendship Medal*:





Ships of the US, Canada, France and Japan participating in Large Scale Global Exercise (LSGE) 23.

*bestowed on foreigners who have made outstanding contributions to China's socialist modernization, the promotion of exchange and cooperation between China and foreign countries, and the protection of world peace?*

## THE SURFACE FLEET REVIEW

From the Government's recent *Defence Strategic Review* (DSR), yet another review has been commissioned to examine the 'lethality' and composition of the RAN surface fleet. The justification given was that with the introduction of the new Nuclear-Powered Submarines (SSNs), the surface fleet's focus needed to change.

The review is being conducted by retired US Navy Vice Admiral Willy Hilarides (former Submariner and Commander of Naval Sea Systems Command - NAVSEA), former Department of Finance Secretary, Rosemary Huxtable, and retired Australian Fleet Commander and former Head of the ADF's Force Design Division, Vice Admiral Stuart Mayer AO, CSC & Bar.

As mentioned in Paper 2 in this edition, the re-focusing explanation is odd as our submarines have been, and will for the most

part remain, separate from the surface fleet's activities.

The best illustration of this is from the 1982 Falkland's conflict, where the Task Force Commander, Rear Admiral Sandy Woodward, did not have command over the SSN's in theatre. They remained highly mobile free agent hunter killers commanded from Fleet HQ Northwood, in the UK. In any future Indo-Pacific conflict with our SSNs being forward deployed and rapidly tasked at the strategic level, why would anyone think this would be different and thus influence the make-up of the RAN's surface fleet?

### Suppression

The Minister's assertion for the need to change, coupled with the suppression of the review's terms of reference and a no public submission phase, could indicate a decision on the surface fleet's make up may have already been made in the back rooms of parliament house. In fact, it is rumoured that the review team have already sent a preliminary 'quick look' finding to the Minister and had it rejected.

Media are already reporting that a Spanish corvette build by Navantia will be purchased and the *Hilarides-Mayer Surface Fleet*

*Review* will essentially set the justification for the purchase, at the expense of something else no doubt.

The one point from the DSR that can be agreed upon is lack of lethality and resilience of the current in-service surface fleet.

### This is not ending well

In Vol 83 No.4 of *The NAVY* the late Senator Jim Molan and our Federal Vice President Mark Schweikert, published an article "Wargaming Tomorrow – It's possible this won't end well". In it they highlighted the lack of lethality in the ADF (including Navy) as a peacetime training force:

... a very good, small but fragile one-shot military lacking lethality (cannot fight nasty enough), sustainability (it cannot fight for long enough) and mass (it is not big enough). Case in point, Anzac class frigates with only an 8-cell VLS (Vertical Launch System) and Destroyers (frigates in Spanish Navy service) with only 48 cells and one Phalanx close in weapon system for 'leakers'. One mild swarm attack and it's all over. And why would anyone think the enemy would do no less?



So the first step should be a resilience upgrade to the current fleet.

Mk-49 RAM and/or Phalanx missile defence systems are much needed in every ship of the RAN to add another layer of self-defence, so the fleet has a greater chance of completing its mission. Navy recently announced the acquisition of a Rheinmetall soft kill decoy system, which will be a great addition to those ships earmarked for it. An 'arm the ship as if your life depends on it' mindset now needs to be applied.

Looking back at the Falklands conflict and the many lessons therein, the RAN is in a similar situation now to the RN of 1981. It was for all intents and purposes a training navy lacking lethality and resilience which was subject to restrictive if not falling budgets. It also felt it had time to 'arm up' if the Cold War went hot. The Falkland's conflict meant the fleet had to go as is. With deadly consequences.

The combat improvements to the RN surface fleet post the conflict is where the RAN should be today, given the predicted likelihood of conflict in our region in the next five years.

### 3+8 or 3+5 – Yet more casuistry?

Alas, this government has already cut defence spending by clawing back \$15B over the next decade. Its defence funding strategy appears to be 'rob Peter to pay Paul,' in a vain attempt to look 'decisive'.

One could be forgiven for thinking the government's attention isn't avoiding war with China but with other issues like *The Voice*, renewable energy, Brittany Higgins, what people get paid and so on.

With regard to the new submarines, it was revealed at a recent Senate estimates hearing by Chief of Navy and the Head of the SSN task force, that the number of AUKUS SSNs to be built in Adelaide will only be five. Many in the community were expecting eight. The reason given was the three second hand Virginia class SSNs being acquired will be counted as the 'the eight' SSNs identified as the necessary fleet size. It was further revealed that that number could fall even further if the option of two more US Virginias is taken up. So much for the continuous shipbuilding strategy.

### VIRGINIA'S, OR NOT?

Long warned of by John Jeremy, Robert Blake, and Dr Neil Baird, writing in *The NAVY*, the U.S. may not have either the capacity, or the modern shipyards to deliver three and up to five Virginia-class SSNs by the early-mid 2030s. In other words, in just seven years' time.

The issue is twofold; reflecting both the *Trump-era* demand signal to create a 100-strong US Navy Submarine Force, and



Image of Hunter-class Frigate (Image RAN).

the long rundown in US shipbuilding yards. Which means that, today, U.S. shipyards are sclerotic and unproductive, when compared to other shipyards. Including in the Far East and in Europe.

This is also becoming more of an issue amongst U.S. legislators, who are increasingly concerned about the transfer of technology to Australia, and the impact of the "loss" of a significant proportion of the class, at such a critical moment.

U.S. legislators will also be watching closely the impact of both the *Smith-Houston DSR* and the *Hilarides-Mayer Surface Fleet Review*. Both of which will, arguably, denude Australia's deterrence capability – necessary to survive a first strike. For which an effective surface fleet and Army are both fundamental. In other words, the loss of these submarines will directly affect the deterrence capability of the USA, and the mutual deterrence umbrella supposedly extended and contributed to by Australia, and other Allies. The rundown of the British Royal Navy, has been of similar concern. The more so, that Britain's nuclear deterrence relies similarly on a second-strike capability. For which scaled conventional forces and its surface fleet are a pre-requisite.

Ironically, modern British shipyards may have more capacity to design and build the AUKUS submarine in the requisite time-frame. But would still require the transfer of front-end technologies from the U.S. – requiring legislative approvals.

The decision to build the AUKUS submarine in Australia represents a significant risk, if they cannot be built in time, or the *Virginia-class* made available. For which *Collins-class* LOTE, is simply not a credible, or safe option. It would be better, by far, to hold to the advice of General Sir John Monash after WW1 (see Paper 4), and to build the *AUKUS-class* in Britain. Saving up to 50% cost and time saving over local construction. The same may, reasonably, apply to the *Hunter-class*? The RAN requires its ships and submarines today, and tomorrow – not in the next decade.

### WESTERN PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

Ships from the navies of Japan, France, and Canada (but, unusually, not including the RAN unlike in 2022), joined two U.S. Navy carrier strike groups to operate as a unified force in the Philippine Sea, June 9.

The aircraft carriers USS NIMITZ (CVN 68) and USS RONALD REAGAN (CVN 76) met the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force's large-deck helicopter destroyer JS IZUMO (DDH 183) – now capable of operating the F-35B – and surface units from Canada and France.

The integrated at-sea exercise brought together more than 12,000 Sailors from across the four maritime nations and supports U.S. *Indo-Pacific Command's Large Scale Global Exercise* (LSGE) 23. LSGE demonstrates the U.S. military's interoperability with allies and partners in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Rear Adm. Jennifer Couture, commander, CSG 11, aboard USS Nimitz, stated:

The credibility of an integrated carrier strike force is the U.S. Navy's greatest deterrent to those who threaten the international rules-based order.

Together with our allies and partners, we're demonstrating our capability to seamlessly integrate across all domains, our readiness to respond to any contingency, and our commitment to uphold freedom of navigation and overflight in the Indo-Pacific region.

JMSDF Rear Admiral Takahiro Nishiyama, commander, Escort Flotilla 1, confirmed:

The First Surface Unit of the Indo-Pacific Deployment 2023, JS IZUMO and JS SAMIDARE, departed their mother ports by June 1 to begin their three-and-a-half-month deployment operations. As the first multinational exercise, I was very excited and reassured to have the opportunity to strengthen cooperation with our important like-minded countries, the Royal Canadian Navy and the French Navy, in addition to the U.S. Navy, with which we have strong bonds of cooperation. I also believe that this exercise embodied



the willingness and ability of Japan and our allies and comrades to continue our engagement in the Indo-Pacific region toward the realization of a free and open Indo-Pacific.

The combined force conducted flight operations and air defence exercise scenarios as well as simulated strikes against maritime targets. Other ships in the partnership included USS ANTIETAM (CG 54), FS LORRAINE (D 657) and the frigate HMCS MONTREAL (FFH 336), from the Royal Canadian Navy.

The training and events provided commanders the chance to practice capabilities across the maritime domain as participating forces focused on anti-air, anti-surface, and anti-submarine warfare tactics and procedures. Moreover, cooperative maritime engagements with such enduring partnerships help strengthen existing relationships and increase collective war-fighting readiness, maritime superiority, and power projection.

Rear Adm. Michael “Buzz” Donnelly, commander, CSG 5/Commander, Task Force 70, commented:

The combined operations of CSG 5 and CSG 11 – exercising with our Canadian, French and Japanese allies – demonstrates our interoperability, combined capability and common commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific.

As a Pacific nation, our presence allows us to coordinate across all domains and maintain a responsive maritime force that is able to support stability and security in the region by being ready across the full spectrum of naval capabilities.

The lack of RAN representation is puzzling – given the continuing emphasis on up-scaling ADF Command and Control interoperability with US and Japanese carrier strike groups, and with France and Canada. Including two (U.S. and Japan) of the four members of the QUAD.

This appears to reflect a drawing back from previous RAN Freedom of Operation (FONOP) patrols, fundamental to “supporting a free and open Indo-Pacific.” Acting also as a deterrence to any potential invasion of Taiwan.

Lack of attendance, also emphasises the lack of indigenous Air Cover in the RAN – and Australia’s inability to fight at scale. Emphasised by the failure of the *Smith-Houston DSR* to address the F-35B *Lightning II* requirement, supported by suitably adapted LHDs and a new RAN aircraft carrier.

There is increasing suspicion that the Government may be walking away from international commitments, including towards QUAD, AUKUS, and Ukraine. In

order to support a Chinese “placation policy,” [1] that – given the apparent deficiencies of the *Smith-Houston DSR* – may be beginning to look more like a policy of *appeasement*?

## VIETNAM JOINS INDO-MAL MULTINATIONAL EXERCISE

Ship 20 of Vietnam Naval Region 3 Brigade 172, arrived in Makassar, Sulawesi, Indonesia, in early June to participate in the 4th *Multilateral Naval Exercise Komodo* (MNEK), according to the *Quân Đội Nhân Dân* (the Vietnam People’s Army newspaper).

The military exercise held by the Indonesian Navy completes in early June. The working delegation (Sailors) of the Việt Nam People’s Navy (VPN) aboard the vessel are expected to partake in a ceremonial parade, a multilateral drill at sea, and cultural exchanges.

Earlier, Ship 20 – a *Pohang-class* corvette built by the Republic of Korea Navy in October 2018 – visited Langkawi (Malaysia) to attend the 16th International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition (LIMA) 2023.

The trip, made at the invitation of Malaysian and Indonesian navies, aims to consolidate and strengthen the friendship and cooperation between the Việt Nam People’s Army and the VPN, with other countries.

It was also intended to consolidate directives of the Vietnamese Central Military Commission and the Ministry of National Defense “on international integration and defence diplomacy, and improve naval troops’ ability to work together in response to common maritime security challenges”.

## GREENWICH STATION

Under current projections, the Royal British Navy will have just 10 frigates – down from 13 – as aging Type 23 vessels decommission. The 10 frigates, plus the six Type 45 destroyers that should still be in service at the time, will struggle to meet the United Kingdom’s naval needs, and commitments to allies including NATO, and AUKUS in the Indo-Pacific.

Aircraft carriers and amphibious ships will require escorting, in addition to protecting fisheries and shipping lanes, escorting vessels of rival fleets in U.K. waters, with at least one legacy territory – the Falkland Islands – to protect. In addition to longstanding commitments to Britain’s waning possessions and influence in the West Indies.

Let alone repeating the Falkland Islands of 1982, the British Fleet today and certainly by 2026, would not be able to mount the type of Amphibious support to the UN (in Sierra-Leone) in 2000 – nor, without the now broken British Army, the invasion of

Iraq in 2003.

A force of 16 warships is at least 32 vessels short. With or without Autonomous Uncrewed Vessels. Which will require sophisticated command vessels to control, in any case. Notwithstanding AI.

Currently, less than 25% of vessels are available for operations at any one time. Given increasing unreliability of the Type 23s; the failures of the Type 45 vessels only now being addressed, and ongoing maintenance rates – exacerbated by a sclerotic Fleet replacement rate, currently in excess of 40 years.

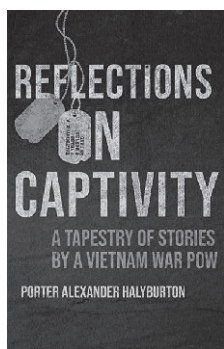
A single carrier battle group – built around one of the two *Queen Elizabeth-class*, requires an attack submarine, destroyer and three frigates. Leaving one frigate to protect the United Kingdom. Iain Ballantyne, naval historian, editor of *Warships International Fleet Review*, and long-term friend of *The NAVY* notes the warship-shortage is not new: “it is a serious challenge that has been building for more than 20 years.”

Cuts since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 have shrunk the British military to less than half its Cold War order of battle. The disastrous SDSR of 2010 created a fabricated *Black Hole* in the region of £45B (sound familiar) that eliminated, among other forces, two aircraft carriers, three SSNs, two amphibious ships, three Supply vessels, and four frigates. In addition to doubling the Fleet Replacement Rate, from about 25 years to fifty, or more. ■



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## REFLECTIONS ON CAPTIVITY

**A Tapestry of Stories by  
a Vietnam War POW**

By Porter Alexander Halyburton

USNI (15 November, 2022)

ISBN-10: 682478254

ISBN-13: 9781682478257

Hardback: \$33.00

Porter Halyburton survived captivity as a Prisoner of War in North Vietnam from 1965 until 1973. His many awards include the Silver Star, Legion of Merit, three Bronze Stars, three Purple Hearts, and seven Air Medals. Porter is from Davidson, NC, a graduate of Davidson College (BA), University of Georgia (MA), and the Naval War College. He was awarded Honorary Doctorate degrees from the University of Rhode Island and Greensboro College. Retired as Commander, U.S. Navy in 1984 and as Professor of Strategy Emeritus from the Naval War College in Newport, RI, retired in 2006.

This is a moving book that seers into the mind of the reader. For those of us who have been trained in escape and evasion, interrogation techniques, and operated ashore the reality outweighs, the preparations. No matter how simulated. The fear of capture remains, which is what the captors exploit.

Porter, flying in Air Wing 7 from the aircraft carrier USS INDEPENDENCE (CVA 62), was shot down on October 17, 1965 – and spent over 7 years in prison. Think about it, that is two years longer than an Allied soldier captured at Dunkirk and released in May 1945.

In capture, the prisoners created their own virtues moving from a “First Line of Resistance” to protect mates, family, and country, to a “Second Line of Resistance” that:

reminded you that there was usually something that you could do in order to render their tactics useless in turning public opinion against the war, especially in America. Ultimately, torture and mistreatment did not serve them well.

Within the second line, was “our captors’ poor understanding of American culture, humour, sign language, and the very fabric of our society.” Additionally, there was homogeneity in that the Hanoi Hilton and the other prisons Porter was incarcerated with “were almost exclusively aviators of some kind, most had college educations, all were volunteers, most of us were very patriotic, and we had great reason to support our government, our democratic way of life, and the sources of prosperity and freedom.” The overwhelming virtue that emerged and connected, often in camera and isolated, was Leadership based on trust and common belief:

We were fortunate that we had capable leaders at every level of command – men who led by example, not just by the orders they issued or the advice they gave. For us, that was normal. That’s why our captors tried so hard to isolate us from our leaders and from one another. They brutalized and isolated our senior leadership, denied that we had ranks at all, and treated us as criminals. Without men like Robbie Risner, Jim Stockdale, Jerry Denton, Bob Purcell and others, we could have been lost.

A humbling book that is surprisingly uplifting. The *Stockdale Paradox* became a principle that emerged:

a technique to navigate challenging and ambiguous times by combining the ability to confront the brutal facts of your current reality, even as you maintain unwavering faith that you will prevail in the end, no matter how distant that is.

That focus in the future, and planning for it became a useful tool for navigating Covid – where the pernicious ambiguity of political-media driven post-first-wave lockdowns, devastated communities. The guards had simply changed uniform. An important read and contribution. Thank you, Porter.



## NEWPORT MANUAL ON ARCTIC SECURITY

By Walter Berbrick, Gaëlle Rivard Piché,  
and Michael Zimmerman

USNI (15 November 2022)

ISBN-10: 1682478297

ISBN-13: 9781682478295

Hardback: \$74.50

Walter Berbrick is as an associate professor in the War Gaming Department, founding director of the Arctic Studies Group, and co-lead scholar of the Newport Arctic Scholars Initiative. Berbrick is an International Affairs Fellow and member with the Council on Foreign Relations, holds a Doctorate from Northeastern University, and served 10 years in the U.S. Navy. Gaëlle Rivard Piché is a defence scientist for Defence Research and Development Canada. She holds a PhD in International Affairs from Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. Lieutenant Colonel Michael Zimmerman earned his BA in History from Ohio State and JD from the University of Cincinnati. Commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps in 2000, he served as the principle legal advisor for the Commander of U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa, where he advised on the international law ramifications of activities throughout Europe, with a primary focus on the Arctic.

The Manual focuses first and foremost on traditional security issues, reflecting on the role maritime forces can play in maintaining peace and security in the Arctic. It goes beyond strictly national security and defence; seeking to address soft security issues when relevant and include “considerations for actors beyond states, including multinational forums, transnational networks, and especially Northern communities and Indigenous peoples”. Despite Treaty obligations, it has relevance to Antarctica – see also Paper 1, this issue. Great power rivalry now meets in both Polar Regions. Perhaps calling for an Antarctic Security addenda to the Treaty – and a book on the same?

The Authors do mention the *Joint Antarctic Naval Patrol* (PANC), and how it may be applied in the Arctic. However, there are fundamental differences between both regions, including the Treaty and existing claims – now in conflict?

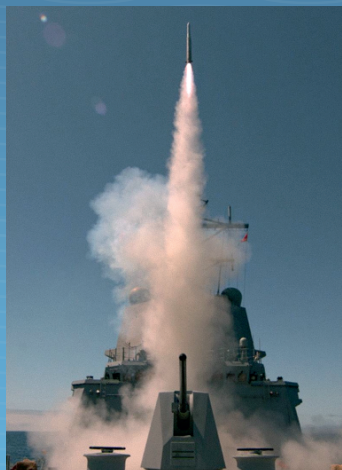
Notwithstanding, reading Antarctic for Arctic: “As activity in the Antarctic increases, gaps in the Treaty framework and regional governance will become more apparent and could undermine regional peace and stability. Existing obligations may not to be enough as the strategic importance of the Antarctic continues to grow – potentially magnifying outstanding issues and disputes among states”.

A worthy and important read. Different conditions apply but a similar study of Antarctica is potentially overdue – with parallels to lessons not learned in the South China Sea. *The NAVY* is happy to review if one exists...





# THE NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA ANNUAL MARITIME AFFAIRS ESSAY COMPETITION



## TOPICS:

- 21st Century Naval Warfare
- Australian Naval History
- Australian Industrial and Merchant Navy Maritime Strategy
- Australian Strategic Alliances: AUKUS, QUAD, Five-Eyes, FPDA, ANZUS.

## CATEGORIES:

A first, second and third prize will be awarded in each of two categories:

**Professional category**, which covers Journalists, Defence Officials, Academics, Naval Personnel and previous contributors to *The NAVY*; and **Non-Professional category**.

Essays should be 2,500-3,000 words in length and will be judged on accuracy, content and structure.



## PRIZES:

	1ST PLACE	2ND PLACE	3RD PLACE
Professional	\$1,000	\$500	\$250
Non-Professional	\$500	\$200	\$150

Essays should be submitted in Microsoft Word format on disk by;

**Post to:** Navy League Essay Competition  
Box 1719 GPO, SYDNEY NSW 2001

OR

**Emailed to:** [editorthenavy@hotmail.com](mailto:editorthenavy@hotmail.com)

Submissions should include the writer's name, address, telephone and email contacts, and the nominated entry category.

*The Navy* reserves the right to reprint all essays in the magazine, together with the right to edit them as considered appropriate for publication.

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE:**

**Saturday 19 August 2023**

Prize-winners announced in the January-March 2024 Issue of *The NAVY*.





**MATCH:** USS CANBERRA II (LCS 30) to be Commissioned at the Royal Australian Navy Fleet Base East, July 22.



**DESPATCH:** USS NIMITZ (CVN-68) To Decommission in 2026 (Image US Navy, MC3 Elliott Schaudt).



**DESPATCH:** USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN-69) To Decommission in 2027 (Image USNI).