



NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

July 2023
Volume 7, Issue 7

DOWN THE VOICEPIPE *do you hear there!*

COMING UP

NLWA and HMAS PERTH (I) Memorial
Foundation AGM Saturday 19th August
2023 time 0930

HMAS PERTH (I) Memorial Foundation
Executive meeting Saturday 2023 to be
confirmed

Facility open each Wednesday morning
0900-1200

ALL ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN THIS
NEWSLETTER ARE PRINTED IN GOOD
FAITH AND DON'T NECESSARY REFLECT
THE VIEWS OF THE
NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA

FGS MECKLINBURG and
USS ROOSEVELT



Navy League of Australia Western Australia Division News update



Looking back at this time last year, we had just initiated a new method of sending out and processing membership renewals. I'm really pleased to say that twelve months on this has proven to be a success and has allowed us to keep a much better eye on just what is going on. Numbers are holding steady around the mid 70's and we continue to gain interest from some of the many passers by who stop to look at or around our facility.

Funnily enough, I also spoke of our upcoming AGM and that on conclusion of the meeting, many of us in the touring group were about to hit the road in search of the next adventure. We find ourselves in this exact position this year, the AGM is coming up on the 19th of the month and the touring group are hitting the road again about a week and a bit later, this time heading north a few hours in search of wreath flowers, country hospitality and fun.

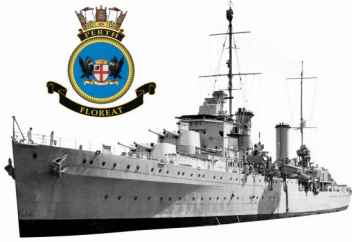
After what seems an eternity and with a couple of last-minute ground works I can report that we have officially signed off of Phase One of the HMAS PERTH I Memorial project and are mere days away from works commencing on Phase Two, the main structure.

What began as a few books on a shelf has grown to a fairly substantial library in the Wardroom/ Main meeting room inside our building. We now have a good range including historical reference books, books on WW1, WW2, Vietnam as well as books of individual sailors accounts of WW2 in particular. A couple of our Executive Committee members are toiling away to compile a list of what we have so that these books can be loaned out to anyone wishing to read them. This has been another great initiative and I hope anyone with an interest comes down to check a book or two out.

The Navy League WA Division polo shirts continue to gather interest. The shirts are great quality and are priced very well for what you get too. A few are held in stock and others can be ordered with a simple email or call to Jim O'Neill should you want one.

Until next month

Brad



HMAS PERTH (I) MEMORIAL UPDATE

Incorporating NLWA and the HMAS PERTH (I) Memorial Foundation Incorporated



Jim O'Neill
CMDR ANC RTD
Project Manager

Another month and a continuing saga of red tape. Fortunately we have completed replacing all piping , septics and leach drain. We still await the disconnection of the defunct Defence installed fire hydrant and the installation of a new curb side hydrant by water corp. The concrete raft for the base of the final stage of the memorial will be laid week commencing 14th. August 2023.

We further await the certification by the building surveyor, DFES and Fire Design Solutions before we are able to our application to council for approval. However, this is not holding up other works which is entail- ing the design of the steel structure and glass.

I still believe we can meet our deadline of completing the structure by year's end in time for the official opening on 1st. March 2024 the 82nd. Anniversary of PERTH's sinking. So get out your prayer mats. Our close knit business team continue to meet every week to nut out the hold ups and plan for the finished model.

David Nicolson and Colin Ralston are engaging in a venture now that we have the soft ware to database all of our artifacts and memorabilia .

Early next month we will be forming a small dedicated team to work on the opening routine and guest list this will be headed by Bob Mummery and Geoff Hickling.

As both NLWA and Foundation AGM'S which are now combined will be held on the 19th. August 2023 I encourage any of our members who have special skills to nominate for a position on the executive so we can progress further our aims and ambitions to make this a premium organisation to belong to. Lions Inter- national have offered to help with any on going maintenance required as well as Bunnings Melville. The Annual reports of both identities will be available on the day of the AGM's and those who aren't able to attend a copy will be forwarded out by email.

Finally those members who have not paid their annual subscription this is a friendly reminder and, of course if a member has some new ideas or an interesting article for the newsletter please forward for con- sideration.



Virginia-class subs visits WA



USS North Carolina in WA (US Navy)

United States Navy submarine USS North Carolina (SSN 777) has arrived in Perth, Western Australia for a scheduled port visit as part of routine patrols in the Indo-Pacific region, [Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter reports](#). The nuclear-powered, Virginia-class vessel, with more than 130 crew members, is docked at HMAS Stirling Naval Base on Garden Island, near Rockingham.

It is the first Virginia-class submarine to visit Australia since the AUKUS announcement in March detailing Australia's optimal pathway to acquiring nuclear-powered submarines. During the visit, U.S. crew members will welcome Royal Australian Navy submariners on board to see the vessel's operations and technology firsthand.

U.S. Ambassador to Australia Caroline Kennedy said the North Carolina's visit demonstrates America's unwavering commitment to its allies and partners. "Our partnership is active and evident every day in Australia, and even more so under AUKUS. The USS North Carolina's visit builds on a strong tradition of Australia welcoming U.S. sailors to its shores, advances our shared security goals in the region, and exemplifies the immense friendship and trust between our countries."

Australian Submarine Agency Director General, Vice Admiral Jonathan Mead, said, "Through increased UK and US port visits and the Submarine Rotational Force –West initiative, Australia will progressively develop the skills, knowledge and expertise to operate, maintain and steward nuclear-powered submarines. Australia is leveraging the more than 70 years of naval nuclear propulsion experience of our AUKUS partners as we become sovereign ready to take ownership of our own Virginia class submarines from the early 2030s."

U.S. Navy Rear Admiral Chris Cavanaugh, Commander, Submarine Group 7 said "Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States share a long history of security cooperation around the world. I am impressed every day by our ability to work together seamlessly during undersea warfare training and operations."

Rear Admiral Simon Asquith, United Kingdom Royal Navy Director Submarines, joined his colleagues in Australia, stating: "This visit demonstrates the remarkable progress being made by our three nations to develop Australia's own SSN capability. The Royal Navy looks forward to conducting similar visits in support of training of Australian personnel to safely operate nuclear submarine technology."

The U.S. submariners will also volunteer in the local community and have the opportunity to enjoy Western Australia's tourist attractions and hospitality venues. The USS North Carolina's visit follows [USS Asheville](#) in March, [USS Mississippi](#) in November, and visits of [USS Frank Cable](#) and [USS Springfield](#) in April 2022.

NZ's first national security strategy



Royal New Zealand Navy frigate HMNZS Te Kaha (FFH-155) arrives at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam for Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2016. US Navy Photo

When Russia invaded Ukraine in early 2022, German Chancellor Olaf Scholtz [proclaimed](#) a "Zeitenwende", or historical turning point. It resulted in Germany's first ever official [national security strategy](#).

The equivalent wake-up call in New Zealand was the 2019 Christchurch terror attack. This hammered home, in the most horrific way, that geographic distance and small size no longer protected the country in ways they might have once, [Alexander Gillespie](#), Professor of Law, University of Waikato, write in [The Conversation](#).

While some countries, such as the [United States](#) and [Britain](#), have had serious national security strategies in place for a long time, for others it takes a shock. In 2018, before the Christchurch atrocity, New Zealand's [national threat level](#) was set at "low".

The [Defence Policy Statement](#) from the same year, although far from naïve, reflected a simpler world. This changed with the more sober [2021 Defence Assessment](#), followed by the [defence policy review](#) announced last year into whether current policy, strategy and capability were fit for purpose.

The [suite of documents](#) released 7 August 2023 – including a first ever national security strategy – provides the answer. In short, New Zealand now faces a very different and rapidly changing world. Business as usual is no longer considered an option.

A new security strategy

In July, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs released its strategic foreign policy assessment, [Navigating a Shifting World-Te whakatare i tētahi ao hurihuri](#). It looks ahead to 2025 and is "intended as a contribution to the national conversation on foreign policy".

The national security strategy, [Secure Together-Tō Tātou Korowai Manaaki](#), along with a new defence policy and strategy statement, rounds out this revised New Zealand worldview. A soon-to-be-released threat assessment from the security intelligence agencies will complete the picture.

Announcing the new strategy, Defence Minister [Andrew Little said](#): "In 2023 we do not live in a benign strategic environment." He went on to say:

"Aotearoa New Zealand is facing more geostrategic challenges than we have had in decades – climate change, terrorism, cyberattacks, transnational crime, mis- and disinformation, and competition in our region which, up until recently, we thought was protected by its remoteness."

While the new assessments and strategic statements come from different state agencies, they nonetheless speak clearly and coherently about the risks to New Zealand's security. The national wake-up call, then, rests on four broad pillars of understanding.

Geopolitical uniqueness

The first consistent theme concerns New Zealand's uniqueness. It is a liberal, multicultural democracy based on a bicultural relationship and te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi. The nation's strong sovereign identity is anchored in the Pacific, and it speaks with a strong and independent voice.

The New Zealand people and their socially cohesive society are the country's most valuable assets. The obligation of guardianship over these, for both present and future generations, means being better prepared for potential external and internal threats. Ensuring national resilience and security underpins the government's unprecedented (at least for this century) planning for and prioritising of that preparedness.

The new strategy identifies national security issues, ranging from terrorism and climate change to attempts to subvert New Zealand democracy. While no one challenge is expressly prioritised, there is a clear emphasis on geostrategic competition and the threats to a rules-based international system. Many of the assumptions about global and regional affairs that have underpinned New Zealand's foreign policy for a generation or more are coming under real and sustained pressure.

The rules-based order that has allowed the country to thrive peacefully is under stress. The risk of open conflict is heightened, with the wider Indo-Pacific region at the centre of geopolitical contests. There are also unpredictable but significant risks – especially economic ones – from those tensions, even without a descent into military conflict. And there is the potential for more than one negative event to occur at the same time.

Partnerships matter

New Zealand's security has to be collective, and there is no lurching towards isolationism. More collaborations are likely to address shared security challenges.

The most important relationship is with Australia, which is also rapidly [upgrading](#) its defence capabilities. As New Zealand's closest partner and only formal ally, Australia is "indispensable to New Zealand's national security".

The US relationship is also very important, of course. Throughout the new documents, the US is variously described as a "crucial" defence partner in general, and "critical for New Zealand's security" in the Indo-Pacific and Pacific regions.

Other less immediately obvious security relationships are also noted, including with Singapore, Japan and NATO. The Five Eyes intelligence network (which also includes Britain and Canada) is cast as "an invaluable support to our understanding and ability to respond to emerging and complex security issues".

The newer multinational security partnerships – namely AUKUS and the "Quad" (US, India, Japan and Australia) – are mentioned. But none of the new documents explicitly state whether New Zealand will or will not join them in the future – other than to say they "may" provide the opportunity for New Zealand to further pursue its interests.

But the Defence Force needs to improve its combat readiness and effectiveness, as well as other military capabilities, and increase its presence in the Pacific. It's clear greater investment is needed in both the short and medium term, but no dollar figures are attached.

Realism over China

The damage Russia's invasion of Ukraine has caused to the international legal framework is clear. But the new strategies and assessments repeatedly highlight the challenge of China.

While peaceful cooperation in areas of shared interest is deemed desirable, China is also recognised as being major driver of geopolitical change, especially in its willingness to be more assertive and willing to challenge existing international rules and norms.

Finally, aspects of China's operations in the Pacific threaten to fundamentally alter the regional strategic balance. New Zealand must plan and be prepared for this.

Overall, the new assessments and strategy represent a turning point: a recognition security threats are rising and will require new approaches. While the detail is not fleshed out, and no doubt there will be partisan debate as the October election nears, the need for real change has rarely been made so clear.



HMAS Anzac home after regional presence deployment

After a busy few months, the ship's company of HMAS *Anzac* has wrapped up the latest regional presence deployment in the Indo-Pacific region.

CAPTION: *HMAS Anzac sailors line the forecastle as the ship arrives at Busan Naval Base, Republic of Korea during a regional presence deployment. Story by Lieutenant Max Logan. Photos by Leading Seaman Jarryd Capper.*

Anzac arrived in Darwin this week, after departing for the deployment from its home port of Fleet Base West in mid-April.

With pandemic restrictions easing around the world, the phrase "join the Navy, see the world" is again ringing true.

Anzac sailor Able Seaman Claire Brown has deployed to sea several times, but the pandemic prevented a number of port visits.

"During the regional presence deployment I enjoyed working with other navies and visiting their countries. My favourite country visited was South Korea – I enjoyed the culture and experiences offered there," she said.

"While at sea, I enjoyed watching the F-35Bs launch from USS *America* and conduct a close fly-by of *Anzac*."

Able Seaman Brown said time away from Australia is not without its challenges, and support from home was an important part of the deployment.

"To my family and friends, I appreciate the ongoing love and support they provided on a daily basis. Our visit to Darwin has also enabled the opportunity for my partner to visit after five months apart," she said.

"But even with the challenges, if someone asked me if they should join the Royal Australian Navy, without a doubt I would recommend it.

"The Navy provides people with life skills and independence that is rare to find in other jobs. You will meet people who will become friends, and in most cases, family for life."



CAPTION: *Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force personnel welcome HMAS Anzac to Kure, Japan, during a regional presence deployment.*

Commanding Officer *Anzac* Commander Barton Harrington accepted 'the weight of command' from his predecessor, Commander David McPherson, at sea in June.

He hit the ground running, integrating with a US Carrier Strike Group before conducting Exercise Lumbas in the Philippines and supporting Indo-Pacific Endeavour in Indonesia.

"Our regional presence deployment has seen ship's company conduct the important role of training, maritime exercises and other engagements with Australia's regional partners," he said.

"I'm immensely proud of the efforts of the crew throughout the deployment and thankful to their families back home who support our people during these essential deployments.

"*Anzac's* busy program is set to continue during the conduct of further activities under Indo-Pacific Endeavour, alongside other ADF units and regional partners."

Deployment highlights include:

- ✦ Several port visits and an Anzac Day commemoration in Singapore.
- ✦ Exercise Bersama Shield with nations of the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA).
- ✦ A port visit to Busan, South Korea, and participation in Exercise Eastern Endeavour.
- ✦ Operation Argos.
- ✦ Integration with a US Carrier Strike Group.
- ✦ Maintenance period alongside in Singapore, supported by the FPDA, RAAF, and Navy's Fleet Support Unit.
- ✦ Exercise Lumbas with the Philippine Navy and port visit to Subic Bay.
- ✦ Port visit to Kure, Japan.
- ✦ Port visit to Surabaya, Indonesia, in support of Indo-Pacific Endeavour.
- ✦ Cooperative activities at sea with Canada, Japan and the US.
- ✦



CAPTION: Royal Australian Navy's *HMAS Anzac* (centre back), Royal Malaysian Navy's *KD Lekir* (right) and *KD Gempita* (left), and Republic of Singapore Navy's *RSS Vigilant* (centre front) sail in formation during officer-of-the-watch manoeuvres as part of Exercise Bersama Shield 2023.



HMAS Brisbane leads international fleet into Sydney

Air defence and anti-submarine warfare are some drills planned for the 27th iteration of Exercise Malabar, hosted by Australia for the first time.

CAPTION: *HMAS Brisbane's ship's company observe the Sydney Harbour fleet entry for Exercise Malabar 2023. Photo by Leading Seaman Matthew Lyall..*

Warships from India, Japan and the United States have joined HMAS *Brisbane* and HMAS *Choules* for the east coast exercise from August 11-21.

Aviation, communications and replenishment at sea between ships are also planned – with Navy MH60R helicopters, RAAF F-35A Lightning II, Hawk 127 and P-8A Poseidon aircraft in support.

Brisbane led the fleet entry into Sydney Harbour for the exercise and Commanding Officer Commander Kingsley Scarce was looking forward to highlighting the capability of his crew and the Hobart-class destroyer. "It's my personal responsibility to maximise the combat capability of this ship and I use exercises like Malabar to make sure we are ready to do whatever the government needs us to," Commander Scarce said.

The exercise also includes ships' gun crews practising engagement of surface targets, using various weapons. One of *Brisbane's* 5-inch gun crew is Able Seaman Jedd Bushell, who said it was important to regularly fire to maintain skills.

"It's always been fascinating seeing other nation's navies and how they like to do things, we always learn a lot," Able Seaman Bushell said.

"It's all about working together with our allied partners and performing serials to see how well we work together as a team."

The exercise will begin with a harbour phase, including cultural exchanges and an Australia versus India cricket match.

Things will then transition to a sea phase, with practice for boarding operations.

"We might speak English, but we might not speak the same English and it's very important we understand the human side of being interoperable with each other," Commander Scarce said.

The exercise aims to build relationships to help the militaries get comfortable working with each other and ensure systems are interoperable.

"We'll really test each other out and make sure we know exactly how we each work and how to work together more effectively," Commander Scarce said.

Retired Royal Navy submarine prepares for final dismantle in world first



HMS Swiftsure in dry dock at Rosyth (Picture: MOD).

Retired Royal Navy submarine HMS Swiftsure has dry-docked at Rosyth as it prepares for final dismantle in a world first.

The Submarine Delivery Agency (SDA) described the moment as a "milestone", with Swiftsure set to be the first UK nuclear-powered submarine to be fully dismantled by the end of 2026.

This type of comprehensive dismantling process has not been attempted by any other nation and around 90% of components, including valuable steel, are able to be reused or recycled.

[Aukus: How new deal could create Royal Navy's most-advanced and most powerful attack submarine](#)

[Multimillion-pound major refit project starting on nuclear submarine](#)

[From Jolly Jack Tars to the Wooden Walls: Royal Navy nicknames explained](#)

Swiftsure was part of the Swiftsure-class of nuclear-powered attack submarines that entered service in the 1970s and served for more than 20 years.



Exclusive: How do you dismantle a nuclear submarine?

The boat is being used as a demonstrator and the task of dismantling it falls jointly onto the SDA and Babcock International, a British defence company that traces its origins to the 19th Century and currently specialises in nuclear engineering.

In contrast, the SDA is a relatively new agency, having been established in 2018, to manage the procurement, in-service support and disposal of UK nuclear submarines.

Nuclear submarines are some of the most complex equipment in the world, according to the SDA.

Dismantling nuclear submarines is an intricate process involving stages like defuelling the reactor, removing radioactive components, and segmenting the vessel.

Ensuring radiation is contained relies on strict safety measures and radiological surveys, while proper waste management, recycling, and international agreement compliance are essential to tackle environmental and security issues.

The SDA and [@Babcockplc](#) reached a disposals milestone as Swiftsure was dry-docked in Rosyth to begin preparations for final dismantling.

Swiftsure is being used as a demonstrator and will be the first UK nuclear-powered submarine to be fully dismantled by the end of 2026.

VESSEL REVIEW | CÉLADON – FIRST IN NEW SERIES OF SHIP ASSIST TUGS FOR FRENCH NAVY

By **Baird Maritime**



Photo: MarineTraffic.com/Michel Floch

French shipbuilder Piriou has delivered the first unit in a new series of 20 all-steel tugs ordered by the French Directorate General of Armaments (DGA) for operation by the French Navy. *Celadon* has an LOA of 26 metres, a beam of 8.4 metres, a displacement of 275 tonnes, a crew of four, and a diesel-electric propulsion arrangement consisting of two main engines, two Schottel azimuthing thrusters to provide enhanced manoeuvrability, and a bow thruster. The propulsion can deliver a bollard pull of 35 tonnes and a speed of 12.5 knots. Piriou said the design work that went into the series also involved the use of a virtual model. Through this approach, the company was able to develop an ergonomic wheelhouse layout to better suit the requirements of the DGA. The tug is also equipped with a firefighting monitor with a discharge rate of 600 cubic metres per hour. DMT Marine Equipment meanwhile supplied the towing winches placed at the bow and the stern. The electronics suite includes two radars from Furuno.



Photo: MarineTraffic.com/Eugene GILLET

Construction of the series commenced at Piriou's Concarneau facilities before the end of 2020. The tugs are being delivered to the navy at a rate of four per year beginning in the summer of 2022. Fifteen of the tugs – *Celadon* included – will be for harbour operations only while the remaining five will be slated for both harbour and coastal/offshore operations. Each of the five tugs of the latter variant will therefore be equipped with space for two additional crewmembers and greater capacity for fuel and provisions to enable sea voyages of up to five days in duration.

All tugs in the series will be used to provide berthing and unberthing assistance for the French Navy's larger surface ships and submarines. For handling submarines, the tugs will each be fitted with custom hull protection just below their respective waterlines. *Celadon* will be homeported at the naval base in Toulon on the French Mediterranean coast. Another six harbour-only tugs and one harbour-and-coastal tug all from the same series will also be stationed at Toulon. All 20 Piriou-built tugs will replace 22 older vessels that the French Navy is currently using for coastal towing and related duties.

‘We have no time to waste’: Keogh details Labor’s ADF recruitment and retention platform

|By: [Liam Garman](#)



Image credit: Department of Defence | Cpl Michael Currie

Minister for Veterans’ Affairs and Defence Personnel Matt Keogh sat down with Defence Connect to detail the Albanese government’s plan to enhance recruitment and retention within the Australian Defence Force.

Embracing risk and improving incentives for service members will be at the core of the Albanese government’s Australian Defence Force recruitment and retention platform, the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs and Defence Personnel told Defence Connect this week.

The government’s workforce strategy has been launched following April’s Defence Strategic Review, which detailed significant ADF, APS, and defence industry workforce challenges that threaten to hinder Australia’s warfighting capability. The review’s authors, Professor Stephen Smith and former chief of the defence force Sir Angus Houston, detailed that the workforce challenges were so acute that the Royal Australian Navy would face “challenges” ensuring combat readiness and integrating future capabilities into service.

Recommendations within the document include broadening Defence’s recruitment framework to expand the eligibility pool of candidates, centralising ADF personnel management, and conducting a comprehensive review into Reserve forces.

“In their time in government, the Opposition only grew the ADF by about 2,000 personnel in a decade and in recent years, the size of the ADF has been going backwards,” Minister Keogh explained.

“The Defence Strategic Review made it clear that based on the strategic circumstances we face, we need to improve the recruitment and retention of ADF personnel, and we have no time to waste.”

To achieve this, Minister Keogh explained that the federal government is in the process of instituting a range of recommendations from the Defence Strategic Review that will both enhance Defence’s recruitment process but also help deliver a fulfilling career for current members of the ADF.

“The Defence Strategic Review recommends changes to policy, process, risk appetite, and our approach to recruitment in order to meet our workforce goals,” the minister explained.

“After all, our people are our most important Defence capability and we want more Australians to have the chance to experience a rich and rewarding career in the ADF.”

In May, the federal government took the step of appointing then Major General Natasha Fox to the role of Chief of Personnel, who has been tasked with overseeing an increase in the efficiency of personnel management across all services.

“We took swift action to appoint a new Chief of Personnel, whose role it is to manage all personnel matters across the five domains, reporting directly to the Chief of the Defence Force,” he explained.

“I’m working closely with Lieutenant General Fox as we strive to improve the recruitment of people into Defence, and importantly retain those people, making sure they, and their families are best supported during their time in service.”

The government has also taken steps to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of recruitment, partnering with Adecco for the creation of ADF Careers.

Billed as a new era for recruitment, the government hopes the new partnership will reduce time taken for recruitment into the ADF, which can currently take up to a year.

“Last month, I joined Lieutenant General Fox to launch ADF Careers, marking a new era for Australian Defence Force Recruitment.

“It’s no secret we need to step up our recruitment efforts, and the DSR has confirmed that.

“Through the Albanese government’s new approach to Defence recruitment, we are reaching further than we ever have before, making sure that we’re taking Defence careers direct to prospective candidates, no matter their location.

“Many people are surprised to learn about the diversity of roles on offer in the ADF – alongside the traditional ADF roles you might expect, we need health specialists, mechanics, and marine technicians, sparkies and data specialists, and many more.

“We need to better attract people to the ADF, and when we do, we need to get them in the door.

“Working with our new recruitment partner, Adecco, we will be opening the door to more people, and getting them through the recruitment pipeline faster.

“We’re also improving the support for people in service, with retention bonuses, improvements to entitlements, health care, and access to housing.”

Navy extends service lives of four more destroyers

By [Geoff Ziezulewicz](#)



The Navy announced that four more guided-missile destroyers will have their service lives extended to 40 years. One of those warships, *Milius*, is shown here during its April 16 transit through the Taiwan Strait. (Navy via AP)

The Navy plans to extend the service life of four guided-missile destroyers that were slated to be retired in the coming years, adding four or five years to each of the warships' standard 35 years of service.

Under a plan announced last week, the destroyers *Ramage* and *Benfold* will see their services lives extended to fiscal 2035 and fiscal 2036, respectively, [according to the Navy](#).

The destroyers *Mitscher* and *Milius* will each have their service life extended by four years, to FY34 and FY35, respectively.

Mitscher was commissioned 29 years ago, while *Ramage* entered service 28 years ago. *Benfold* and *Milius* joined the fleet 27 years ago.

The move follows a similar service life extension announced in March for [Arleigh Burke](#), the first destroyer in the class.



[Navy will extend service life of destroyer Arleigh Burke](#)

The first of its class warship was originally slated to retire in FY 2026 after 35 years of service.

By [Geoff Ziezulewicz](#)

It reflects the sea service's desire to maintain fleet size and capability in a time of intense competition for defense dollars, while showing Congress that the service can spend judiciously.

While the Navy scrapped a plan in 2020 to extend the service lives of every destroyer in the fleet, the sea service is now analyzing each ship in the class to determine whether extending its life makes sense.

"These extensions align to Secretary of the Navy [Carlos Del Toro's] commitment to Congress during the FY-24 posture hearings to analyze service life on a hull-by-hull basis and extend the correct ships in order to be good stewards of resources invested in the U.S. Navy by the American people," said Rear Adm. Fred Pyle, head of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations' Surface Warfare Division, in a statement. Each of the four ships has received Baseline 9 upgrades to its Aegis combat system via the destroyer modernization program, which provides comprehensive midlife upgrades to the ships.

"Based on analysis by the Navy's technical community, these extensions were feasible because each ship properly adhered to lifecycle maintenance plans and were well maintained in good material condition by their crews," the Navy said in a release announcing the life extensions. The Navy has 73 Arleigh Burke-class destroyers in service and is continuing to evaluate the feasibility of extending each ship's service life. While extending the service lives of these destroyers partly reflects concerns about maintaining the size of the fleet, it also takes other factors into consideration, according to [Bryan Clark](#), a retired submarine officer and director of the Hudson Institute think tank's Center for Defense Concepts and Technology.

For one, upgrades are getting easier, and the Navy already keeps amphibious assault ships, aircraft carriers and ballistic missile submarines in service for 45 years or more, Clark said in an email.

"The original 35-year life of the (Arleigh Burke) class was based on an expectation that they would become obsolete before they got too old to maintain," he said. "With increasingly digital Aegis, combat system upgrades are getting easier and less expensive."

Money for new destroyers remains limited, and the readiness of that fleet is uneven as well, Clark said.

The plan to extend the life of all destroyers was first announced in 2018; it would have modernized every ship in the class under a ["no destroyer left behind"](#) approach that was later scuttled.

"The Navy took five years to announce these extensions because, in part, the condition of ships was not well understood," Clark said. "There are many more ships whose service lives have not been extended because their condition is not well understood enough."

About [Geoff Ziezulewicz](#)

Geoff is a senior staff reporter for Military Times, focusing on the Navy. He covered Iraq and Afghanistan extensively and was most recently a reporter at the Chicago Tribune. He welcomes any and all kinds of tips at geoffz@militarytimes.com.

Is it time for ‘militarised’ Coast Guard to ease the burden on Navy?

|By: [Stephen Kuper](#)



With the growing debate about the future constitution of the Navy’s surface fleet and speculation about major modernisation programs like the Hunter Class frigates gather pace, is it time to look at establishing a dedicated “militarised” Coast Guard to ease the burden on Navy and deliver better maritime security outcomes?

As the largest island continent on the planet with a maritime jurisdiction of in excess of 8 million square kilometres, Australia, as a nation and a people, is defined by its relationship with the ocean. Beyond the social and cultural aspects, our relationship with the ocean and our maritime approaches has ranged from angst and anxiety through to hostility as a result of our “tyranny of distance”.

Recognising the centrality of maritime security and stability, the government’s Defence Strategic Review (DSR) reinforced the renewed importance of the nation’s maritime security, with the Royal Australian Navy requiring an immense and comprehensive restructuring to optimise the fleet for the future tactical and strategic challenges we face throughout the Indo-Pacific.

Unpacking this further, the DSR emphasises a three-pronged approach to modernising and expanding the nation’s maritime combat capabilities, including renewing and reinforcing the nation’s commitment to the AUKUS trilateral agreement and the nation’s pathway to delivering the SSN-AUKUS, nuclear-powered submarines, and what is described as: “An enhanced lethality surface combatant fleet, that complements a conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine fleet, is now essential given our changed strategic circumstances.”

This major step change in the thinking of Navy’s mission profile, responsibilities, and implications for force structure have been further influenced by the government’s plans to field two distinct tiers that are capable of “enhancing Navy’s capability in long-range strike (maritime and land), air defence, and anti-submarine warfare requires the acquisition of a contemporary optimal mix of Tier 1 and Tier 2 surface combatants, consistent with a strategy of a larger number of small surface vessels”.

In order to deliver this desired outcome, the Albanese government has initiated yet another “short, sharp” review into the size with an emphasis on larger numbers of smaller vessels along with the composition and nature of Australia’s future surface fleet force structure in the context of complementing the nation’s future nuclear-powered submarine fleet.

This seemingly indicates an expansion of the Royal Australian Navy’s surface fleet, bulking the fleet out with smaller, “Tier 2”, corvette style vessels to provide a continuous, regional presence, with vessels that aren’t as focused on high-intensity conflict, but still capable of adding something to any prospective fight, while being complemented by larger, more complex “Tier 1” vessels, similar to the Hobart Class and Hunter Class, respectively – adding to this, the DSR states: “This would significantly increase Navy’s capability through a greater number of lethal vessels with enhanced long-range strike (maritime and land) and air defence capabilities, together with the ability to provide presence in our northern maritime approaches.”

At the centre of the government's review into the surface fleet is the aforementioned emphasis on Tier 1 and Tier 2 surface combatants which has stimulated intense debate over what constitutes a Tier 1 and Tier 2 surface combatant respectively, particularly igniting a debate over the relevance and suitability of corvettes for Australian surface in place of the Arafura Class offshore patrol vessels (OPV) at the cost of an as yet undefined number of maligned Hunter Class guided-missile frigates.

Yet there does appear to be a very large, very distinct elephant in the room, that is that the three priorities, the security of Australia's vast maritime jurisdictions, coupled with our responsibilities in the "immediate region", and finally the security of our sea lines of communication and maritime trade all require VASTLY different solutions.

The corvette debate

Sadly, we're not going to end up with a fleet of sweet new Corvette Stingrays (sorry to burst people's bubbles, my own included) but the debate surrounding corvettes in the Australian context is important to understand, with two distinct camps arguing for and against the respective platform-type for Australian service.

In the pros column is Professor Peter Dean from the Sydney University-based US Studies Centre who [argues](#), "to meet the Defence Strategic Review's requirement for an enhanced-lethality surface fleet, minimally armed offshore patrol vessels and patrol boats won't cut it. Instead, Defence should consider replacing the OPV build with a fleet of much more capable combatants, and a corvette or light frigate option should be seriously looked at".

Meanwhile, in the cons column is Rear Admiral (Ret'd) Rowan Moffitt who [counters](#) Professor Dean's position, with an emphasis on the geographic realities that face Australian policymakers, stating, "Australia is surrounded on three sides by open ocean (the so-called blue water) and must operate there, as well as in the archipelago to the north (the so-called brown water). Blue-water navies can comfortably and effectively operate in brown-water areas as the RAN has always done, but brown-water ships – including corvettes – will fail quickly in blue-water operations."

Now yes, I have extensively summarised the arguments of both men, but the corvette debate is not entirely the point of this piece, this is just about providing a basis of understanding the broader operational requirements of maritime border security, sea control, and long-range power projection as part of the government's signature "impactful projection" doctrine articulated in the Defence Strategic Review.

In particular is the vastly different requirements of maritime border security, where the Arafura Class offshore patrol vessels will currently fit within the Navy's force structure, alongside the Australian Border Force and Navy's own fleet of Cape and Evolved Cape Class vessels, respectively (with the future of Navy's Evolved Cape Class once the arrival of the Arafura Class is still unknown).

Re-enter the debate around the potential acquisition of corvettes as proposed with both Lürssen and Navantia, respectively presenting corvette designs as a solution to meet the range and firepower concerns raised about the Arafura Class vessels (and rightfully so), yet corvettes, or at least those proposed by both Lürssen with the C90 and Navantia with the Avante-series, have a marginal increase in firepower through the incorporation of vertical launch systems and naval strike missile cannisters with a seemingly marginal increase in range.

Such a swap doesn't necessarily seem like a bad idea if it's a one-for-one swap of the currently planned fleet of Arafura Class vessels (with some vessels to be retained by Navy? We're not quite sure) with the entire fleet to be based across northern Australia to maximise their time on station. However, they also seem like a bit of overkill for the largely maritime border security and interdiction role they would largely be filling, yet somewhat undercooked for adding serious weight to an Australian or allied taskforce, so perhaps it's time for a bit of a rethink?

Time for a militarised Coast Guard?

Australia is unique for a maritime nation of its size and jurisdictional responsibility in that it doesn't have a dedicated, "militarised" Coast Guard responsible for maritime border security and interdiction and law enforcement, rather we depend on Navy and a small detachment of the Australian Border Force under the auspice of Maritime Border Command to provide the capability with overlapping areas of responsibility and capability, it seems like a costly and illogical duplication of resources and effort.

Structurally, the command is led by a rear admiral of the Royal Australian Navy and incorporates a range of personnel from across Defence, the Australian Federal Police, and Border Force creating virtual spaghetti bowl of inter-agency and inter-department roles and responsibilities, proof that Australia likes to do things the hard way.

These points, coupled with the ongoing discussion and review into the constitution of the Royal Australian Navy's surface fleet, strengthens the argument for rationalising the force structure and composition of the Navy and accordingly, the nation's maritime border security and interdiction force in a formalised and importantly, in this era of renewed great power competition, militarised Coast Guard.

Reprioritising funding from the contentious and troubled Hunter Class frigates to fund a fleet of corvettes as a replacement for the Arafura Class again appears to be a rather attractive option rather than maintaining and upgunning the order for the Arafura Class as is, and could serve as the basis for the nation's new, militarised Coast Guard, effectively easing the operational burden on Navy to provide Coast Guard duties and responsibilities, allowing them to focus on high-end warfighting. There are some issues in that Border Force and Home Affairs don't technically have the funding available to run such an operation, so folding the Coast Guard into the functional command structure of the Navy (as is done with the United States Coast Guard) would also serve to provide a streamlined organisational structure, while drawing on available funding from the now defunct Australian Border Force's Maritime Border Command.

I know at the onset of this piece you were expecting me to probably be against corvettes entirely, well surprise, you're wrong, corvettes provide a very real avenue for enhancing Australia's naval capabilities, just not in the way they're being billed by much of the defence and national security ecosystem.

Simply put, corvettes (as proposed) for a dedicated, militarised Coast Guard equals a big tick. Corvettes for Tier 2 surface combatants to "enhance" the long range, persistent strike capabilities of the Navy, big minus. As retired RADM Moffitt states, "If Australia is willing only to fund a brown-water naval combat force, let's be honest about that. Buying brown-water ships and telling our people we have a lethal blue-water capability that can deliver impactful projection and deterrence by denial would be a very expensive delusion."

Final thoughts

The rapidly deteriorating geopolitical and strategic environment that is transforming the global and regional security paradigm requires a realistic analysis and assessment by Australia's policymakers, taking short cuts and ending up with 50 per cent of something, as opposed to 100 per cent of nothing is an admirable goal, but will ultimately only prove more costly in the long run as we scramble to rapidly develop high-end warfighting capability.

Equally, both the Australian government and the Australian public have to accept and understand that we will need to dramatically increase spending in our national defence and do so over the long term, rather than short term sugar hits or slights of hand that push money out over the forward estimates and allow inflation to account for "increases" in spending, despite there being little-to-no new money in real terms.

Ultimately, this comes back to the government's shift away from a "balanced force" towards "focused force" as championed in the Defence Strategic Review. It equally fails to account for the planned increase in ADF personnel by 2040 and places ultimate hope in a series of as yet to be developed "wunderwaffen" or wonder weapons, like autonomous systems, cyber or tactical weapons like HIMARs and others to provide both "impactful projection" and deterrence against "any potential adversary".

Again, referring back to retired RADM Moffitt in his previously quoted statement about our brown-water versus blue-water naval capability discussion, this is a conversation that needs to be had in the open with the Australian people and the implications of pursuing one course of action equally needs to be discussed as ultimately, they will be called upon to help implement it, to consent to the direction, and to defend it should diplomacy fail.

This requires a greater degree of transparency and a culture of collaboration between the nation's strategic policymakers and elected officials and the constituents they represent and serve – equally, this approach will need to entice the Australian public to once again invest in and believe in the future direction of the nation.



G'day! HMS Spey becomes first Royal Navy ship to dock in Brisbane since 1995



HMS Spey sails into Port of Brisbane (Picture: Defence Australia)

HMS Spey has become the first Royal Navy ship to dock in Brisbane, Australia, in 28 years. Her visit coincided with the Lionesses winning their game against Nigeria at the 2023 Women's World Cup, which was also taking place in the Sunshine State city. Local media were invited on board the Royal Navy warship and a special reception was held in honour of the game. The Batch 2 River-class offshore patrol vessel has been deployed to the Indo-Pacific region since January 2022, sailing more than 69,793 nautical miles.



HMS Spey hosted a special evening reception and screened the Lionesses' match live from the ship (Picture: British High Commission Canberra).

She has conducted two operations and taken part in two disaster relief missions.

Last week, HMS Spey tweeted that she had been observing whales in the ocean, helping with her secondary role of monitoring marine biodiversity.

We have been at sea less than a week and seen [#whales](#) at sea! This is a first for us seeing this type of behaviour and allows us to conduct a secondary role of monitoring [#ocean#biodiversity](#). [#marinelife#NaturePhotography#nature#lifeatseapic.twitter.com/MQ1vykhOnD](#) In July, [HMS Spey enjoyed a special reunion with her sister ship HMS Tamar](#) in Cairns, the first time they had berthed next to each other in almost two years.

Spey is crewed by 46 sailors, with half of the crew trading places with shipmates from the UK every few weeks. The constant rotation of crew allows the Navy to get the most out of its ships, with the crews at sea for up to nine months of the year and the vessel ready for operations all year round.

Business as usual no longer sufficient: Rebuilding US, allied military power to counter great power rivals

By: [Stephen Kuper](#)



USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) sails in the Indian Ocean during Talisman Sabre, July 22, 2023 (Source Department of Defence)

The era of undisputed US and Western military dominance is over as great power rivals increasingly field capabilities of similar quality and quantity, narrowing the edge and diminishing the advantages we have long held as insurmountable – rebuilding those capabilities are now paramount.

From the moment the first laser-guided bombs fell from combat aircraft and Tomahawk cruise missiles were launched from warships in Persian Gulf against targets across Iraq in January 1991, the very nature of contemporary conflict changed forever.

The speed, accuracy, and lethality of then next-generation weapons systems, the interconnected coordination, command and control, and overwhelming advantages in surveillance, intelligence, and reconnaissance capabilities provided the US-led Western world with a seemingly unassailable tactical and strategic advantage.

This advantage would be repeated to similar lethal effect in almost every combat scenario throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, no matter the adversary, the US and its allies were overwhelmingly superior.

Yet across the globe, watching, waiting, and collaborating were potential adversaries we had been assured would become responsible, respectable, and engaged members of the global communion of nations as the hubris of the post-Cold War era swept across the world and we, in the West, embraced the “end of history”.

Little by little, the era of unrestricted globalisation saw the US and Western world, including Australia, give away our industrial capacity in favour of “just in time” global supply chains and costly military adventurism which has arguably left the world in far worse shape than what the previous incarnation of a bipolar world built.

As the US and its allies got bogged down in costly campaigns in the Middle East and Central Asia, bringing to bear their conventional military and economic might against small, ragtag bands of militia and insurgents, potential great power adversaries watched and applauded as the weakening of their adversaries took place.

For China, the US intervention during the Taiwan Strait Crisis of the mid-1990s revealed their vulnerabilities to and necessity for fearsome, globally-focused power projection capabilities like aircraft carriers and their supporting battlegroups, long-range strategic bomber forces coupled with high-technology, integrated command and control systems creating fully digitised combat forces deployable across the globe in short notice.

Meanwhile, for the former Soviet Bloc, the swift and utterly humiliating routing of Iraqi forces in both iterations of the Gulf War revealed their own vulnerabilities of traditionally Soviet-style doctrine, relying heavily on masses of men, machines, and high explosives to get the job done to rapidly manoeuvrable, interconnected, and high-technology “focused” fighting forces.

Fast forward to today and we now find ourselves in an era of renewed and mounting great power competition, characterising the birthing pains of a new and truly multipolar world, more akin to the geopolitical reality of the late 19th, early 20th century of competition between various imperial powers.

Equally concerning is the now global recognition that the globalisation of supply chains has allowed for the proliferation of multi-use technologies to potentially rival nations, with seemingly innocuous technologies as simple as a PlayStation 2 console being considered a national security threat at the time and thus not able to be exported to Iraq (yes, I am serious). The reality is, the increasing technological basis of our modern lives means that the proliferation of technology is now tipping the scales against us.

Highlighting this is US-based think tank RAND Corporation in a piece titled, [*Inflection Point: How to Reverse the Erosion of US and Allied Military Power and Influence*](#), highlighting a number of key concerns and the corresponding solutions that face the United States and its global alliance network in an era of mounting great power competition.

‘Business as usual’ not up to snuff

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, coupled with mounting tensions over the future of Taiwan, and broader geopolitical manoeuvring across the globe and throughout multilateral organisations have combined to shock both the United States and Western allies, including Australia, out of the comforting slumber of our “long holiday from history”.

Highlighting this, the RAND report states, “There is now a growing consensus among Western policymakers and strategists that ‘business as usual’ with respect to national security strategy and defence posture is no longer sufficient. But much remains to be done in the United States and elsewhere to determine how best to proceed with building the military capabilities and operational concepts needed.”

Unpacking this further, the report states, “it has become increasingly clear that the US defence strategy and posture have become insolvent. The tasks that the nation expects its military forces and other elements of national power to do internationally greatly exceed the means that have become available to accomplish those tasks”.

These startling statements, in the matter of a few lines, shatters the long-held security blanket of nations like Australia who depend heavily on the United States to provide the strategic stability and security that enables our tactical mobility in an uncontested manner for at least the last three decades.

However, all is not lost, with RAND stating, “Reversing this erosion will call for sustained, coordinated efforts by the United States, its allies, and its key partners to rethink their approaches to defeating aggression and to recast important elements of their military forces and postures.”

This is not the only confounding factor that confronts the United States and allies like Australia, with RAND identifying other key factors impacting the long-held tactical and strategic dominance of the United States as the world’s sole superpower since 1990, including:

- The US defence strategy has been predicated on US military forces that were superior in all domains to those of any adversary – this superiority is gone. The US and its allies no longer have a virtual monopoly on the technologies and capabilities that made them so dominant against adversarial forces.
- Critically, US and allied forces do not require superiority to defeat aggression by even their most powerful foes, rather the United States, acting in concert with key allies and partners, can restore credible postures of deterrence against major aggression by great power competitors, without having to regain tactical or strategic overmatch in any operational domain against potential rivals like China or Russia.
- The brutal Russian aggression on Ukraine has awakened the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and global allies to the risk of a wider war in the Euro-Atlantic area. This realisation has motivated America’s European and global allies to make significant increases in defence spending and preparedness, but much more must be done over the next few years to deter and defend the region against further aggression by Russia’s reconstituted military forces.

Taiwan has embraced the rhetoric of asymmetric warfare, but its budget reflects a preference for legacy systems. As a result, there is a gap between the United States' and Taiwan's goals for the direction of Taiwan's defence program. Each of these factors combine to feed into the growing recognition in Australia that we will need to be less dependent upon the strategic umbrella provided by the United States, rather as articulated in the Albanese government's Defence Strategic Review, we must be capable of far more strategic thinking and capability in our own deterrence, namely, "Australia does not have effective defence capabilities relative to higher threat levels. In the present strategic circumstances, this can only be achieved by Australia working with the United States and other key partners in the maintenance of a favourable regional environment. Australia also needs to develop the capability to **unilaterally deter any state** from offensive military action against Australian forces or territory."

In order to survive and thrive in this new environment, Australia will be called upon to truly embrace what the government's own Defence Strategic Review describes as "national defence" and a "whole-of-government approach" which includes a number of central components worthy of consideration, namely:

- Defence strategy and policy supporting whole-of-nation strategies;
 - An enhanced and expanded alliance with the United States, including key force posture initiatives in Australia;
 - A new, more focused approach to defence planning based on net assessment;
 - A focus on deterrence through denial, including the ability to hold any adversary at risk;
 - A new approach to critical Defence capabilities that drives force structure;
 - A new approach to force posture for the ADF; and
- A whole-of-nation effort to develop strategic resilience.

This by now well-documented recognition highlighted in the Defence Strategic Review echoes the aforementioned factors identified by RAND, particularly the need to build a mass of capabilities across the US and its global alliance network to build a quantum of mass in terms of economic and industrial capacity and direct military power that can be marshalled against a potential great power adversary.

Deterrence without dominance

In recognising the now very real economic, political and materiel military limitations on the United States in the era of great power competition, particularly as the relative power of rival and neutral or adjacent nations continues to rise, challenging both the traditional concepts of deterrence and dominance held true by United States and its allies in this new global power paradigm.

The impact of this new reality is best explained in the RAND report, which states, "The Cold War ended in 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union. In the succeeding decades, US military forces have enjoyed an enviable record of success against the armed forces of other nations. But disparate developments abroad and at home, including North Korea's acquisition of atomic weapons; the September 11, 2001, attacks and the US response to them that diverted resources from force modernisation; the proliferation of technologies for sensing and precision guidance; Russia's use of overt military aggression; and, of greatest consequence, China's economic take-off and concomitant military modernisation, have led to the deterioration of the military balance in regions of strategic importance."

As this mounting array of challenges across the globe continue to place strain on the tactical and strategic capabilities of the United States, allies will be required to step up their game in order to more effectively spread the burden, while also creating a greater, aggregated holistic capability ranging from economic and industrial capacity to direct multi-domain combat capabilities.

Recognising this, RAND articulates, "reversing this erosion will call for sustained, coordinated efforts by the United States, its allies, and its key partners to rethink their approaches to defeating aggression and to recast important elements of their military forces and posture" incorporating a number of key findings, namely:

- **Posture:** RAND recognised that US and allied forces based in Europe and the Western Pacific lack the combat capability, hardened and resilient basing infrastructure to survive in a contested, peer-level battlespace, and resupply/mobilisation rates limit the offensive capacity of these forward deployed forces.
- **Sensing and targeting:** Existing surveillance and intelligence gathering platforms and capabilities are increasingly vulnerable to soft and hard kill capabilities across the spectrum, necessitating radically novel approaches to gathering and disseminating relevant information through to command-and-control chains of command.
- **Strike:** The proliferation of advanced combat aircraft across the world, coupled with the widespread adoption of complex integrated air and missile defence and advanced air-to-air missile systems, challenges the traditional air dominance capabilities of the US and to a lesser extent, its allies and partners, requiring the rapid modernisation of the US and allied air combat fleet and supporting platforms and munitions supply.

Asymmetric attrition: Directly preventing an adversary's territorial objectives isn't sufficient in this era of great power competition given the complexity and scope of the potential battlespace, this requires the US and its allies to be capable of defending their homelands, with sufficient capacity to subsequently push back and hunt down enemy forces in a cost-effective manner.

RAND details this, stating, "This approach is quite different from the operations undertaken by US forces since the end of the Cold War, but something akin to it will be necessary to defeat aggression by powerful states that have the ability in a conflict to seize the initiative and move quickly to secure their principal objectives. US and coalition forces simply cannot count on having the time they would need to deploy to the theatre and fight to gain dominance in key domains before attacking the enemy's invasion force at scale."

Ultimately, this only serves to reinforce one truly uncomfortable reality, "Neither today's force nor forces currently programmed by the US Department of Defense (DoD) appear to have the capabilities needed to execute this new approach."

Final thoughts

Importantly, in this era of renewed competition between autarchy and democracy, this is an uncomfortable conversation that needs to be had in the open with the Australian people, as ultimately, they will be called upon to help implement it, to consent to the direction, and to defend it should diplomacy fail.

Our economic resilience, capacity, and competitiveness will prove equally as critical to success in the new world power paradigm as that of the United States, the United Kingdom, or Europe, and we need to begin to recognise the opportunities presented before us.

Expanding and enhancing the opportunities available to Australians while building critical economic resilience, and as a result, deterrence to economic coercion, should be the core focus of the government because only when our economy is strong can we ensure that we can deter aggression towards the nation or our interests.

This also requires a greater degree of transparency and a culture of innovation and collaboration between the nation's strategic policymakers, elected officials, and the constituents they represent and serve – equally, this approach will need to entice the Australian public to once again invest in and believe in the future direction of the nation.

Additionally, Australia will need to have an honest conversation about how we view ourselves and what our own ambitions are. Is it reasonable for Australia to position itself as a “middle” or “regional” power in this rapidly evolving geopolitical environment? Equally, if we are going to brand ourselves as such, shouldn't we aim for the top tier to ensure we get the best deal for ourselves and our future generations?

If we are going to emerge as a prosperous, secure, and free nation in the new era of great power competition, it is clear we will need break the shackles of short-termism and begin to think far more long term, to the benefit of current and future generations of Australians.

JOIN THE AUSTRALIAN NAVY CADETS

What cadets do

Get Out There! If you're into adventure, you'll get as much as you can handle as an Australian Navy Cadet. You'll get to go sailing, hiking, canoeing and camping. Plus you'll learn everything about seamanship. From navigational training to Naval signals and communication.

But it's not all fun and games. You'll have to study first aid and pass muster in parade training. But if you can take on the challenge the rewards are good.



To join you must:

- Be a person ordinarily resident in Australia.
- Be at least 12 years and 6 months old and under the age of 19 years.
- Produce a statement from your family or any medical practitioner as to your ability to participate in Cadet activities.

So if you're ready to get fully trained in adventure, get into the Australian Navy Cadets and get out there!

In 88 Units across Australia, sponsored by the Royal Australian Navy, over 2,500 staff and cadets learn about sailing and seamanship, develop leadership skills and learn how to communicate effectively. The ANC is a voluntary youth organisation which trains young adults to become better citizens for the community. This training involves nautical and maritime activities within a military environment.

They develop confidence, pride and self-discipline whilst having an ocean of fun and making loads of new friends along the way.

Check out our website at www.cadetnet.gov.au/anc, find a Navy Cadet Unit near you and set sail on the voyage of a lifetime.

For information on how to join the ANC, email
ANCreuiting@cadetnet.gov.au

THE
NAVY

All enquiries regarding The Navy magazine, subscriptions and editorial matters should be sent to:

The Hon. Secretary, NSW Division
NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA, GPO Box 1719, Sydney NSW 2001



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

Email to: 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*.



Check out the latest edition of The Navy League of Australia Magazine "THE NAVY" on sale now
Back copies are also now available on the Navy League of Australia official Web Site.

WWW.NAVYLEAGUE.ORG>AU

Photo courtesy of
Department of Defence

Scan for more
information



FREEDOM OF ENTRY

HMAS STIRLING

Saturday 9 September 2023

9.40am

Freedom of Entry
Ceremony commences

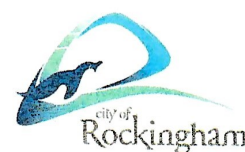
10am

Parade step off

10.45am - 1pm

Freedom of Entry Defence Community Festival

Churchill Park, Rockingham Foreshore



From Jolly Jack Tars to the Wooden Walls: Royal Navy nicknames explained

Xenia Zubova



A petty officer looks on as HMS Kent sails as part of the Carrier Strike Group deployment from HMNB Portsmouth (Picture: MOD). As the world's oldest and most distinguished naval force, the Royal Navy has had numerous nicknames throughout its history.

Established in the 16th Century, from the days of wooden warships to today's aircraft carriers and nuclear submarines, the Royal Navy has had ample time to gather a collection of monikers. This article will explore the noble nicknames that have become part of the venerable institution, as well as terms that would have most commonly been used on the lower decks.

The 'Andrew'

According to Paul White, who wrote a book on the origin and history of Royal Navy nicknames, the Andrew is the traditional lower-deck colloquial term for the Royal Navy. It is one of the most enduring nicknames for the King's Navy with a few opposing theories as to its origins.

The most common theory is that the Royal Navy is named after Lieutenant Andrew Miller, a fervent and fearsome officer in the Impress Service. The Impress Service, also known as the 'press gang', was a form of forced recruitment when ships were short of crew.

During the Napoleonic Wars, between 1803 and 1815, it was common for groups of sailors to seize men for military service – a form of 19th Century conscription. The legend goes that Andrew was so successful he was said to have "owned the Royal Navy".

By the 1850s, continuous service was introduced and the need for press gangs died out as more sailors joined the service interested in making the Navy their career. Andrew Miller is not the only Andrew to have some claim on the Royal Navy moniker.

St Andrew is the patron saint of sailors and fishermen, and another popular theory is that the Navy's nickname is, in fact, an appreciation of Scotland's patron saint. This theory makes sense, as folks back in the day were more religious and superstitious, but it lacks the gravitas of the Andrew Miller tale, however.

While there isn't any evidence to show that Andrew Miller ever existed, the legend lives on in the waves and sails.

The Senior Service

With roots dating back to the 16th Century, the Royal Navy earned the moniker 'The Senior Service' due to its status as the oldest of the British Armed Forces. The English Navy became the Royal Navy after the restoration of the monarchy under Charles II in 1660. As an island nation, the sea played a pivotal role in defending Britain's shores and projecting power across the globe. The term not only signifies seniority in age but also commands respect.



HMS Vanguard submarine whose role is to carry the Trident ballistic missile system (Picture: MOD).

The Silent Service

As technology advanced, the Royal Navy embraced submarine warfare. The nickname 'The Silent Service' is used for the Royal Navy's submarine fleet and its ability to operate undetected underwater, ensuring covert and strategic operations. The Submarine Service motto is "Stealth. Endurance. Flexibility", and, according to the Royal Navy website: "These qualities make our Submarine Service the best in the world."

The White Ensign Fleet

This one is pretty self-explanatory and derives its name from the flag flown on the stern of British naval vessels – the White Ensign. The Royal Navy is united by its motto 'If you wish for peace, prepare for war', and its flag – [the White Ensign](#) – which is flown on British ships and shore establishments around the world. According to Graham Bartram, the UK's Chief Vexillologist (flag expert): "Originally, the Royal Navy didn't just use the White Ensign. "It used the White Ensign, the Red Ensign and the Blue Ensign because the Navy was divided into three different squadrons. And the squadrons each had their own Admiral, Vice Admiral and Rear Admiral."

The year 1864 was a monumental year for the Royal Navy because it was decided then to drop the squadron system and just use one flag for the entire Royal Navy. The decision was made that the White Ensign would represent the Royal Navy from then on.



The White Ensign on HMS Albion (Picture: MOD).

The Jolly Jack Tars

Jack Tar was a common term for sailors in the age of sail. According to Mr White, the term Jack was a frequently used generic term to refer to a mass of common people. What sets sailors apart from the 'mass of common people' is the addition of the word tar. When ships were made of wood, their rigging was made of hemp rope and, while hemp is a durable material, nothing was invulnerable to the salty sea air.

To avoid rot, ropes were soaked in tar which needed to be constantly reapplied. Sailors wore long hair back in the day, while it would not rot quite like the ropes, it did get caught in them aided by the strong winds on the high seas. To avoid having a bad hair day, sailors would braid their hair and dip it in tar used to waterproof the ropes and seal the decks. The tarred pigtailed fell out of fashion as a hairstyle at the beginning of the 19th Century and the last officially recorded pigtail in the Royal Navy is in 1827.

In the 17th and 18th Centuries, the fusion of 'Jack' and 'Tar' evolved into the favoured nickname for merchant seafarers and sailors alike. While the word 'tar' fell out of use, the nickname Jack remains a popular nickname for sailors today.

The Grey Funnel Line

Unlike the Royal Navy, shipping line companies tend to paint their funnels in distinctive colours. For example, Cunard Line, the British shipping and luxury cruise company, paints its funnels red and black. The Blue Funnel Line, a merchant shipping company that was founded during the heyday of the Royal Navy in 1866, has blue funnels, as the company's name would suggest. The funnels of His Majesty's Ships are painted plain grey, hence the humorous nickname.



A view of HMS Victory from HMNB Portsmouth (Picture: MOD).

The Wooden Walls

This is a historic nickname, understandably no longer used today because commissioned Royal Navy ships are no longer made from wood. However, in the age of sail, the Royal Navy was synonymous with imposing wooden warships that stood as bulwarks against invasion.

The nickname 'The Wooden Walls' pays tribute to the vessels that protected Britain's shores and secured its dominance at sea. There is, however, at least one commissioned ship made from wood still technically serving in the Royal Navy's arsenal. Laid down in 1759, HMS Victory is the oldest commissioned warship in the world.

During her heyday, she was the most powerful type of ship of her day with three gun decks mounting 100 guns. She is well looked after in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard and as long as she remains commissioned, it can be argued that the Wooden Walls nickname still applies.

By: [Robert Dougherty](#)



Multi-billion-dollar German shipbuilder Lürssen is proposing a “more bang for your buck” C90 corvette for delivery to the Royal Australian Navy by 2028.

The German shipbuilder, also known as NVL Group, operates across eight locations internationally for the building and refitting of luxury mega yachts and naval vessels. Within Australia it operates subsidiary, Luerssen Australia.

The proposed 90-metre-long C90 corvette design is based on two NATO-standard Multipurpose Modular Patrol Vessels (MMPV 90) already under construction for the Bulgarian Navy in Varna, Bulgaria.

Luerssen said each ship is designed for maritime security and combat scenarios, with a displacement of 2100 tonnes (2300 for Australia), crew of 60 (plus 25 embarked), powered by two diesel engines to a speed of 22knots and a range of up to 6000 nautical miles. The company has indicated two vessels would be built simultaneously with steel cut in 2024, the first finished and delivered in 2028 and one every ten months thereafter.

The C90 can be equipped with 3D search radar, fire control radar, two navigation radars, combat management system, electro-optical and IR sensors, laser warning system, Israeli DSIT Blackfish hull mounted sonar, towed array sonar (optional), a stern ramp launching system, a medium-size multi-mission helicopter and landing deck.

Each vessel could be armed with a 76mm super rapid cannon (120 rounds-a-minute), 35mm anti-aircraft and anti-surface secondary gun (1000 rounds-a-minute), sixteen VLS, eight surface to surface missiles (with the potential for 16 for Australia), torpedo decoys and flare/chaff countermeasures, two 12.7mm machine guns (for the Bulgarian Navy) and two triple torpedo launchers.

The C90 design would likely need to be extended with a larger helicopter hanger as the current Bulgarian AS565 Panther medium helicopter (13.68m length, 3.97m height) is more compact than the RAN MH-60R Seahawk helicopter (19.7m length, 5.18m height).

“First and foremost, a ship needs to be able to deliver a lot of bang, what you need is the capability to carry long range missiles,” said [Lürssen chief executive officer and managing partner Peter Lürssen](#).

“You want to have good number of surface-to-surface missile and you need a very substantial range. The 90-metre ship that we have has a good range and the current configuration is anti-submarine, anti-surface. We can further enhance it by replacing a short to medium range vertical launch with a long-range vertical launch.

“The Bulgarian ship has a three-dimensional warfare capability (air, land, sea), is it a heavier ship? Yes, it is a few knots slower but it is originally designed for heavy and rough seas.

“You want a stable, strong platform, because you need to be at sea for a prolonged period of time. You can’t do this in a ship that is not offering the best human comfort, because then the capabilities of the crew will suffer. I think in the waters around Australia, you’re probably better off with a 90-metre heavy ship.

“We already put Australian built (SAAB 9LV CMS) consoles onto the Bulgaria ship. We do have a high Australian content... The adaptations can be done in Australia (including Australian CEA radar), we have a supply chain. And I think we will be having a great Australian content. We really have all capabilities necessary to build the ship in the country without problems.”

Luerssen has indicated production of future C90 corvettes could be streamlined by extending existing supply chains used in the construction of Arafura Class offshore patrol vessels (OVP80) in Adelaide and Perth.

The Australian Government originally signed the contract for the Arafura Class in 2018, laid the first keel in 2019, delivered the first vessel in 2021 and has 12 offshore patrol vessels to be delivered in 2030.

University of Sydney, United States Studies Centre foreign policy and defence director Professor Peter J. Dean, who worked as a co-lead of the 2023 Defence Strategic Review Secretariat for the independent leads, said Defence will be assessing costs, schedule risks, workforce and maintenance in relation to any proposal for a new Navy corvette.

“As the (Defence Strategic Review) capability section says, it’s about speed to capability. Some (designs) are less mature, Defence is going to have to offset maturity of design, scheduling and costs,” he said. “The ultimate aim they’re looking at is doing things with less risk, less costs, and really a big emphasis on speed.

“They (Luerssen) have a workforce, they have a shipyard, they have a vessel that’s an evolution of the OPV that delivers as much capability on paper as an ANZAC Class frigate does; that can be done quickly. On the surface, that’s a strong combination of factors, a workforce, a shipyard, an evolved design... that is already under construction.

“Given the higher risk strategic circumstances, the need for as DSR says ‘an enhanced capability in things such as long range strike but also in air defense and anti-submarine warfare’... stepping up from an offshore patrol vessel or a patrol craft to a corvette or light frigate option gives you those are different capabilities.

“From the design Luerssen put forward the C90 has 16 vertical launch system cells, each of those VLS cells can carry four evolved Sparrow missiles. That is a significant advantage over where the offshore patrol vessel, our Armadale and Cape class patrol vessels sit at.

“It can take a towed sonar array, has torpedo tubes and can operate a helicopter at the back. So in terms of anti-submarine warfare, it’s a massive step up from our patrol boats which have basically no capability in this area.”

Luerssen’s design could potentially compete against designs from British engineering company Babcock, Spanish state-owned shipbuilder Navantia and fellow German shipbuilder ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems (TKMS). Australia already has a contract signed with [BAE Systems](#) Maritime Australia to build nine Hunter class frigates under Project SEA 5000 Phase 1. Prof Dean said Defence would have to consider whether other options are available.

“A Hunter Class from its sensor systems, its radar systems, its multi-mission capable and capabilities is much much larger, but it’s also significantly more expensive,” he said.

“According to what we know from Senate estimates and the Audit Office report, nine proposed Hunter class frigates currently sits at around \$50 billion dollars and rising and will only get more expensive; we don’t know how much the hunter class will cost.

“We also conversely don’t yet know exactly how much a corvette or light frigate option from the Navantia, Luerssen or TKMS or anyone else would offer.

“As a ballpark figure, you’re going to get considerably larger number of Corvettes. If you look at a price estimate around \$5 billion, which potentially could be the cost of one Hunter Class frigate, you could get somewhere between six to ten corvettes for that price range.

“Now if you’re looking at ten corvettes with 16 VLF cells in them. That’s 160 VLF cells across those ten corvettes, there’s only 32 VLS cells in one Hunter Class frigate, so there’s a return on your bang for buck but also ten corvettes can be in a lot more places at the same time than one Hunter class frigate.”

Mr Lürssen said the company was also willing to transport one of their floating maritime docks (dock 11) for the Henderson shipbuilding precinct in Western Australia. That dock (65000 ton lift capacity) would be moved from Hamburg, Germany to the site in Perth, allowing a viable option for maintenance on navy warships, large commercial vessels and even Virginia Class submarines.

“That proposal is over a year old, (but) we stand behind the proposal,” he said. “Would I think that it’s sensible to have a large dock there (in Perth); absolutely.

“I think as overall deal with AUKUS, you should try to get the American position ships in Australia. I mean, talking as industry, you want them to be in Australia and not in Singapore because they have lots of maintenance that need to be done and you can do it as good as your Singaporeans can.

“We stand behind the proposal to move the dock there if so wanted, and offer them the possibility to actually lift very large ships.”



PRODUCED BY THE NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA WESTERN AUSTRALIA DIVISION

Hon Secretary CMDR Jim O’Neill ANC RTD

PO Box 735 Fremantle WA 6959

Bandjoneill.1@bigpond.com

Catch us on Facebook and the web

Navy League of Australia Western Australia Division

Web: www.navyleaguewa.org.au

Facebook: Navy League of Australia WA Division @navyleaguewa



Interested in Australia's Future?

Join the Navy League of Australia



The Navy League of Australia was established in Australia in 1900, and in 1950 became an autonomous national organisation with a Federal Council and Divisions covering all states and territories. Its aim today, as it was in 1900, is to create and interest in the sea and to keep before the Australian people the fact that we are a maritime nation and that a strong Navy and a sound maritime industry are indispensable elements to our national wellbeing and vital to the freedom of Australia.

So why don't you join us!

You do not need to have had a previous maritime history. Merely the basic requirements you need is to have an interest in maritime affairs.

Your membership will include a regular UpToDate news on maritime affairs, a monthly newsletter, and include a quarterly copy of the Navy League's magazine 'The Navy '. Together with outings and mate-ship.

Junior Members of the Navy League of Australia Western Australia Division aged between 16 – 18 years of age Subscription \$15.00 (includes \$1.36 GST) (Proof of age required)

Subscriptions are due on 1st. July in each year, and your membership will be current to 30th. June immediately following the date on which you join the league, except that if your first subscription is received during the period 01st. April to 30th. June in any year, your initial membership will be extended to 30th. June in the following year.inc

Subscription \$35.00 (including \$3.18 GST)

Bank details: National Australia Bank

BSB: 086918 A/C: 293707180

Navy League of Australia WA Division

The Navy League of Australia Western Australia Division – **Membership Application**

I wish to be come a member of the Navy League of Australia, the objects I support.

Name: [Mr] [Mrs] [Ms] [Rank]

Street:

Suburb: P/Code

Phone:Mobile:

Email:

Signature:Date:

Please email or post your application to the below address.

PO Box 735

Fremantle WA 6957

Bandjoneill.1@bigpond.com



HMAS PERTH (I) MEMORIAL FOUNDATION INCORPORATED

MEMBERSHIP / DONATION APPLICATION (*cross out which is not applicable*)

Name	<div>First</div> <div>Surname</div>		
Address	<div></div>		
Suburb	<div></div>	State	<div></div> P/C <div></div>
Email	<div></div>	Phone	<div></div>

Reply to: secretary@hmasperth1memorial.com.au (*Preferred*)

OR

Hon Secretary
HMAS Perth (I) Memorial Foundation Incorporated
PO Box 735 Fremantle
Western Australia 6959

Membership Fee

\$35.00

Banking Details: Bank West
BSB: 302-162 A/C: 1499868

Where possible please email applications / donations with a bank receipt

Subscriptions are due on the 1st. July in each year and your membership will be current to 30th. June immediately following the date you join the Foundation., except that if your first subscription is received during the period 1st. April to 30th. June in any year, your initial membership will be extended to 30th. June in the following year.

DONATION (Please complete this section if donating)

I wish to donate the following amount to THE HMAS PERTH (I) Memorial Building Fund

My details have been included in the above portion of the form

DONATION

\$	<div></div>
----	-------------