



NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

July 2024
Volume 8, Issue 07

DOWN THE VOICEPIPE *do you hear there!*

COMING UP

NLWA Executive meeting
Monday 07th.October 2024

Facility open each Wednesday morning 0900-1200

The NLWA and HMAS PERTH (I) Memorial
Foundation will conduct their AGM's follow-
ing each other on the 25th. August 2024
commencing at 1000

F 591 VIRGINIO FASAN
ITALIAN NAVY



Navy League of Australia Western Australia Division News update



As you begin to read through this edition we are just a matter of weeks away from our AGM and as usual, I encourage anyone interested to come along. Please remember to let Jim know your intentions as refreshments are available on conclusion and we need to ensure we have enough food and drinks to feed and water all attendees. The post AGM meet and greet is your chance to ask any questions you may have or put forward any ideas to assist us in making the WA Division stronger as we head into the coming year. As is said, there are no silly questions and any ideas on moving forward will be greatly received. All in all, the WA Division is not just about the Executive committee, it is an organisation for all and we look forward to helping you feel a part of the bigger picture.

July saw a group of 17 of us plus one very cute 10 month old (yes, I'm biased as he is my first grandchild) attend the annual Christmas in July luncheon with the Northam RSL. Despite not being optimal driving conditions, Northam is an easy ninety-minute drive from the Perth metro area and as per the norm, we all met up at a roadhouse along the way and travelled in a convoy to our destination. I'm not sure if our group is just plain lucky or if someone from the RSL is smiling at us but one or more of our group always manage to win one of the key raffle prizes on the day. Ultimately, we all had an enjoyable time, not only among ourselves but with our very good friends in Northam who continue to put on such a great activity.

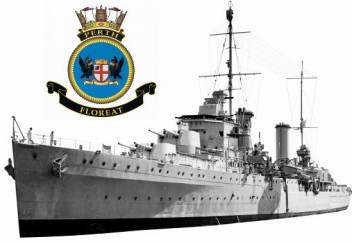
A few days post luncheon we were honoured to meet with Federal Vice President Mark Schweikert at our facility and show him first-hand what we have achieved thus far as well as what is currently being worked on in relation to our memorial. For me, it was great to finally get to meet Mark, I have seen him during online conferencing but never in person. After the obligatory tour of the WA Division facility we headed next door to the Swan Yacht Club for dinner, a couple of drinks and the continuation of the chat we had started earlier.

As this is the last newsletter before the AGM I'd like to take the time to thank everyone for their support of the Executive committee and Navy League in general. Let's keep banding together to make the coming year as successful as the year we are about to farewell.

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

This month continues to be extremely busy with the main construction well underway. The steel frame and firewall are now in place and secured and the Glass fins have been installed. The doorway into the existing facility has now been opened to allow the photographic glass to be installed in a week or so. East Fremantle Town Council have once again completed the resurfacing of the parade ground and continue to keep the lawns and edges mowed and tidy.

Having had visitors over from Queensland and Victoria we have hosted The HMAS PERTH Association Qld branch which were very excited about the memorial, whilst here they presented three mosaics of HMAS PERTH (I) (II) and (III).

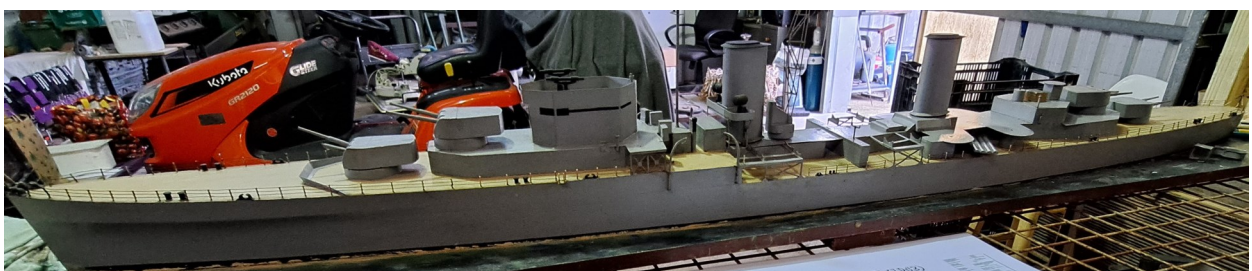
We are now at a stage where we can complete the outside of the memorial and are relying on further donations and grants to fit out the interior including lighting, Internal wall, Ceiling and fire door connecting the original facility. Once this is done the feature wall will be installed show casing images of PERTH and HOUSTON. The final portion will be then landscaped.

The contractors have informed us that the construction will be completed by the end of September, allowing time to prepare for the official opening on the 1st. March 2025.

On the 25th. August 2024 we will be having our AGM and I encourage as many members and interested persons to attend.

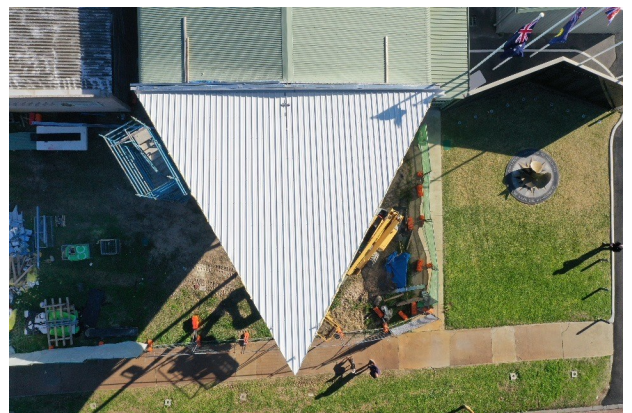


**HMS AMPHION later HMAS PERTH (I)
model has arrived from the UK for
restoration with the sponsorship of
Lions International**





**Resurfacing of the HMAS PERTH
(I) Memorial Parade Ground
Courtesy of the Town of East
Fremantle**



THE HMAS PERTH ASSOCIATION QUEENSLAND DIVISION

VISIT THE HMAS PTH (I) MEMORIAL





Former members of HMAS PERTH (II)



EX HMAS ANZAC (157) sitting on the hardstand at Henderson awaiting her final fate now that she has finally paid off.



It's with deep sadness we bid farewell to USS Tarawa LHA-1, today she was towed out of Pearl Harbor to be a target in [#RIMPAC2024](#). [#usstarawa](#) [#lha1](#) [#gatornavy](#) [#navalsafari](#) [#aviationsafari](#) [#aviationpreservation](#) [#boneyardsafari](#)

HMAS *Melville*

Decommissioning

Thursday 8 Aug 2024

Cairns, QLD



HMAS *Broome* (II)

Decommissioning

Thursday 29 August 2024

HMAS Coonawarra, Darwin, NT





SUBMARINE ROTATIONAL FORCE – WEST

From as early as 2027, AUKUS partners will have a rotational presence at HMAS *Stirling* of one UK and up to four US nuclear-powered submarines – known as ‘Submarine Rotational Force-West’ (SRF-West). SRF-West will help Australia build the necessary operational capabilities and skills to be ‘sovereign ready’ so we can safely and securely own, operate, maintain and regulate a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines from the early 2030s.

Why do we need this rotational presence?

SRF-West will accelerate our efforts to develop Australia’s capability to safely and securely operate and sustain its future nuclear-powered submarines.

Australian sailors will deploy on UK and US boats to develop at-sea experience with naval nuclear propulsion, while Australian maintenance personnel will support these submarines at shore.

Is this a basing of UK and US submarines in Australia?

No. Australia has a longstanding bipartisan policy of no foreign bases on Australian soil.

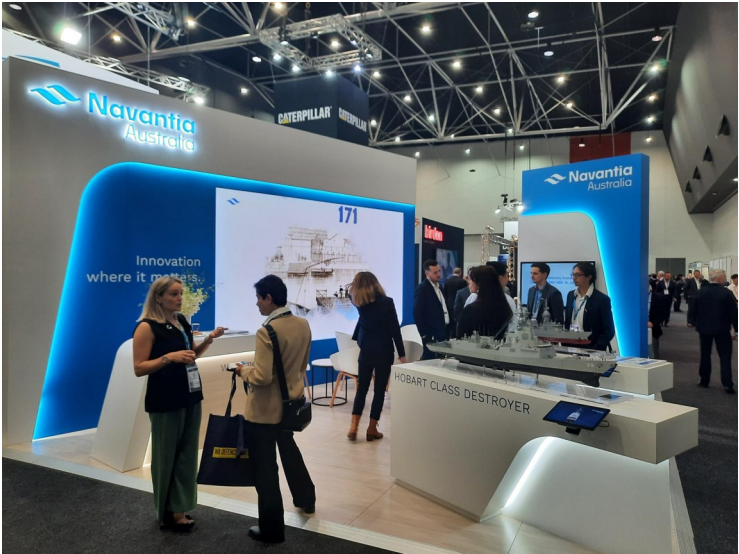
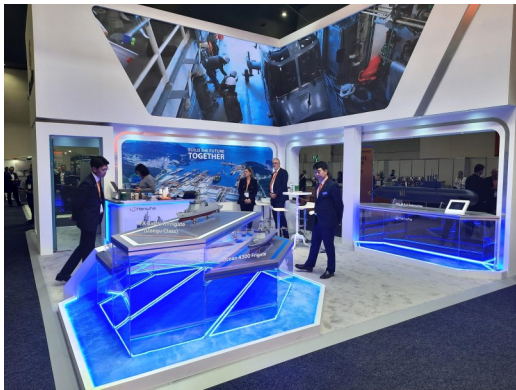
Activities under SRF-West are consistent with this policy.

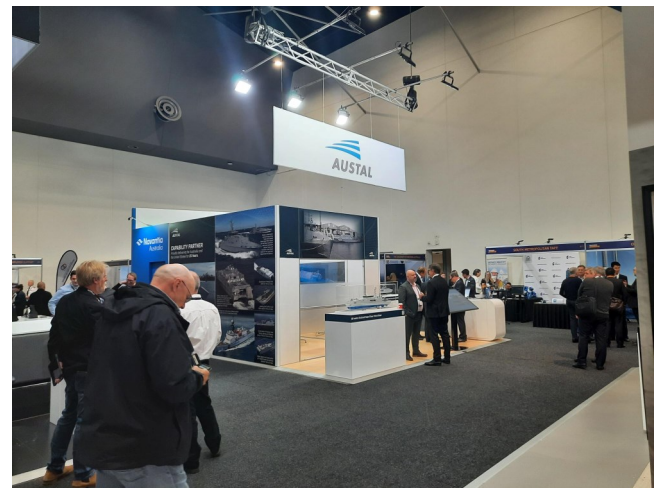
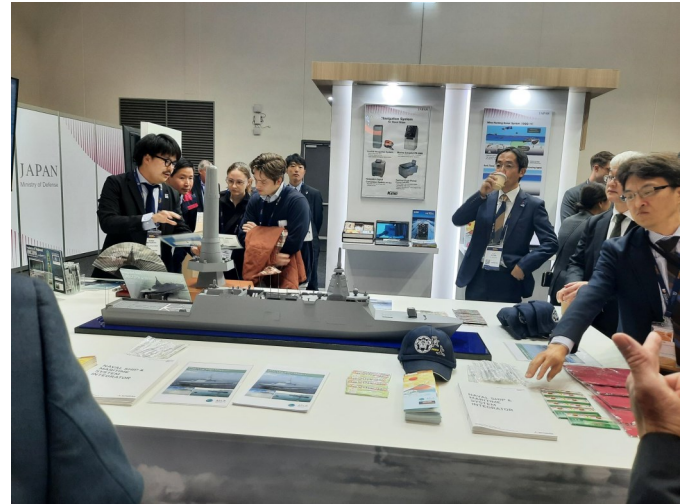
SRF-West platforms will be rotated through HMAS *Stirling* in Western Australia and will not be permanently based in Australia.

What arrangements will this initiative come under?

The US bilateral elements of SRF-West will be implemented under the US-Australia Force Posture Agreement. UK participation in SRF-West will be enabled through separate arrangements.







Indian Ocean Defence & Security (IODS) 2024 has concluded, leaving a lasting impression as a pivotal event, which fostered timely discussion for the Indian Ocean region's key players.

At a critical time for Australian defence strategy and spending, the IODS 2024 theme "Where AUKUS Meets the Quad" resonated strongly, positioning the event as an important platform for engagement among the decision-makers shaping these initiatives.

The true highlight of IODS 2024 was the unprecedented gathering of the three AUKUS naval chiefs in Australia for the first time. This historic moment illustrated and reinforced the nations' commitment to the AUKUS relationship, demonstrating a united and strategic pathway forward. Their presence signified a shared vision and collaboration that is essential as Australia embarks on substantial funding, upskilling, and technological development for the SSN-AUKUS nuclear-powered submarine program.

The expanded and elevated industry exhibition buzzed with activity, showcasing cutting-edge technologies and fostering vital business connections. Over 135 organisations from 12 countries participated, highlighting the global interest and collaboration in Australia's defence initiatives.

The final day was a highlight, featuring the Innovation Awards pitches and the Careers Day program. Secondary and tertiary students explored future career paths, engaging with industry leaders and gaining inspiration for potential roles in Australia's defence future.

Indian Ocean Defence & Security 2024 not only reinforced its status as a premier event for the defence industry but also set the stage for continued innovation and collaboration for years to come.

We look forward to welcoming you back to IODS in 2026 from 26-28 May.

Deputy PM backs 'heart of surface combatant fleet' Hunter Class despite price tag

01 August 2024 By: Robert Dougherty



Acting prime minister and Minister for Defence Richard Marles MP at the BlueZone Group stand at the Indian Ocean Defence Symposium at Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre, Western Australia. Photo: Andrew Green

Australian Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles has defended the alleged \$4 billion price tag of each future Hunter Class frigate.

The Minister for Defence, speaking during a press conference at RAAF Base Tindal in the Northern Territory, declared the ships as the “heart of Australia’s surface combatant fleet” and “quietest frigate in the world”.

“The Hunter Class frigates are going to be as capable a frigate as exists in the world today. Hunter Class frigates will be the quietest frigate that exists in the world today. And we are very excited about what Hunter will add to our surface fleet,” he said during the press conference

“It will really be at the heart of our surface combatant fleet. Given, in a sense, what this announcement today is about is an acknowledgement of the vastness of our ocean approaches, of the areas that we need to surveil, of the task at hand for our Defence Force, in terms of surveilling and going after the assets of any adversary at sea, Hunter is right at the forefront of that as well. So, we are really looking forward to Hunter.

“And Hunter has had its issues, but it is very much back on track. And we are looking forward to the implementation of Hunter into our surface fleet.” Earlier this week, Greens spokesperson for Defence Senator David Shoebridge said the incoming Hunter Class frigates, at \$4 billion each, would be one of the most expensive ships ever built. “The Hunter frigate program is turning into a black hole for the Labor government to pour billions of dollars into,” he said.

“The Albanese Labor government has now had multiple opportunities to course correct but they have doubled down on failure. “If we look at countries like South Korea, they are manufacturing bigger and better-equipped ships for a fraction of the price.

“This is not about investing in defence, it’s about rewarding failure by politicians who repeatedly prove themselves incapable of holding Defence to account. “The Greens referred this program to the NACC because it showed clear signs of corruption, but this whole program also shows a complete disregard for the public interest, value for money and what is in the best interests of the defence of Australia.

“Over the next decade, the Albanese government has planned for nearly three-quarters of a trillion dollars to be spent on Defence. If that spending looks like the Hunter frigates program, we will blow endless billions of dollars and end the decade far less safe.”

A public statement from the Greens alleges that the federal government had handed over a further \$11 billion to build the steel hulls for three Hunter Class frigates.

The initial \$2.25 billion contract was for just the design and “productisation” of the Hunter Class frigate; however, it was amended without tender this month and jumped to nearly \$15 billion. It is understood that the additional \$11 billion provided by the government is just for the hulls of three ships, not including any weapons, radar or other essential equipment, according to the Greens.



Submarine Rotational Force – West Infrastructure Project

Parliamentary approvals

The Australian Government will invest up to \$8 billion over the next decade to expand HMAS *Stirling*, on Garden Island (*Meeandip*).



The SRF-West Infrastructure Project will support the scale of infrastructure required for conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines—both for visiting rotational submarines and for Australia's own nuclear-powered submarines in the future. The project is being delivered in coordination with other upgrades already underway at HMAS *Stirling*, and most of the project will be completed within the existing base footprint.

Parliamentary approval for the Priority Works elements of the SRF-West Infrastructure Project is being sought from the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works (known as the PWC).

What is the PWC?

The PWC assesses capital projects proposed by Commonwealth Departments (including Defence). It considers the purpose, need, scope, cost effectiveness and public value of proposed projects and reports to Parliament. It aims to ensure that Commonwealth-funded works are delivered effectively and efficiently, and deliver value to the Australian public.

The PWC is a joint committee that includes six Members of the House of Representatives and three Senators, who consider the project and report to the Parliament on whether the proposed work should be delivered. Importantly, the PWC approval process is a separate, standalone Australian Government approval process—it is in addition to environmental approvals.

On 30 May 2024, the Parliament approved an exemption from referral to the PWC for certain elements of the SRF-West Infrastructure Project that need to be delivered more urgently.

The urgent work includes in-ground engineering services, working, training and living-in accommodation, an emergency response and control centre, and infrastructure and minor maritime works to support increased mooring requirements.

The Priority Works proposed under the SRF-West Infrastructure Project was referred to the PWC on 6 June 2024, and members of the public can make a submission to the PWC inquiry.





[Austal](#) Limited and [Civmec](#) Limited have today announced the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to form a Joint Venture (JV) to submit a proposal to the Commonwealth of Australia to support the LAND8710 Phase 2, Landing Craft Heavy (LC-H) project.

LAND8710 Phase 2 (LC-H) will deliver enhanced transport and littoral manoeuvre capability to the [Australian Army](#) to enable greater capacity and reach over the Indo-Pacific region.

Under the MOU, Austal and Civmec will develop the structure, delivery process and detailed scope of the JV in preparation to submit tenders to the Commonwealth for LAND8710 Phase 2 (LC-H). It is intended for the JV to contract directly to the Commonwealth to undertake shipbuilding tasks for the LC-H project within the assembly hall at Civmec's Henderson facility.

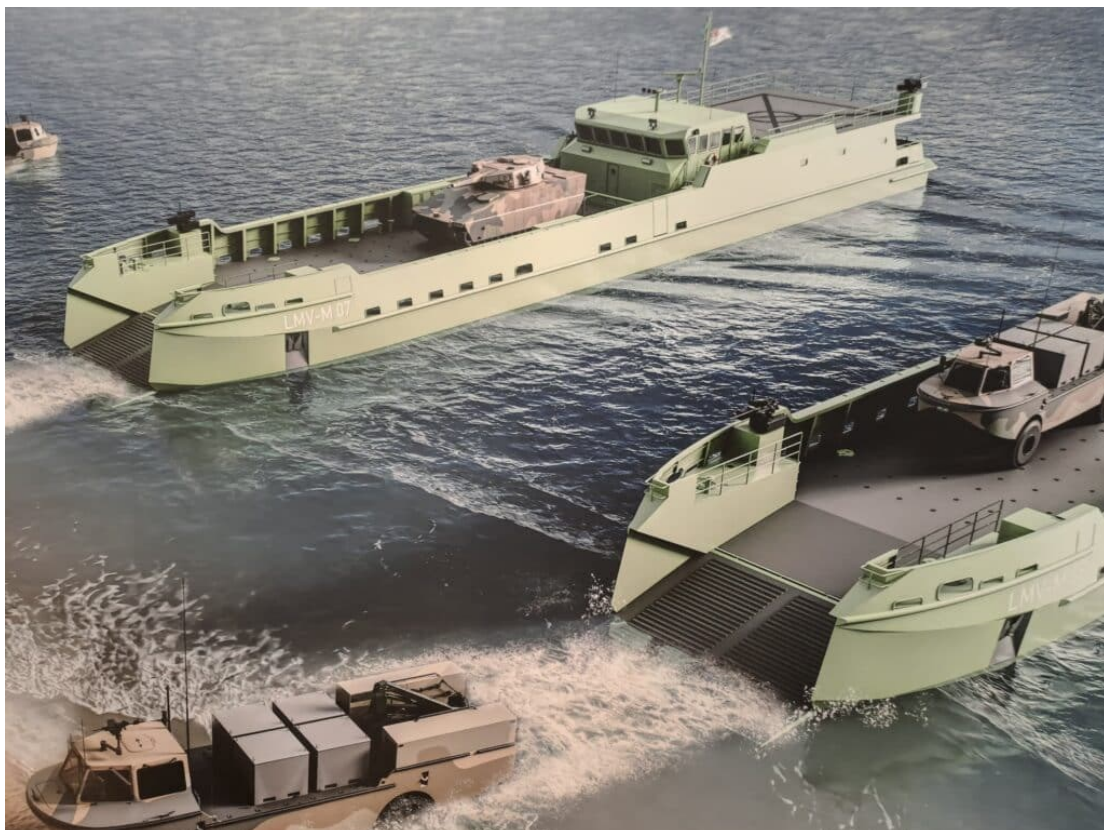
Civmec's Executive Chairman, Mr Jim Fitzgerald, said "The proposed Joint Venture between Austal and Civmec will be an important step to ensure the continuation of naval shipbuilding at Henderson, with tenders, detailed scopes and commercial arrangement now able to be finalised at pace."

"By combining Civmec's Henderson shipbuilding facilities, which include the largest heavy engineering facility of its kind in Australia, our systems, steel manufacturing expertise and 4,000 strong labour force, together with Austal's naval shipbuilding experience and long track record of delivery, the JV would be very well placed to deliver efficient Continuous Naval Shipbuilding in Western Australia to Defence."

"There are many details to work through, including expansion of Civmec's footprint in Henderson to ensure there is no impact to Civmec's ongoing work for the resources, energy and infrastructure sectors".

Austal's Chief Executive Officer, Mr [Paddy Gregg](#), said "We are excited by what a partnership could mean for continuous sovereign shipbuilding, particularly in Western Australia. A partnership and commercial arrangement with Civmec should complement our Strategic Shipbuilding Agreement with the Commonwealth."

"It would provide the Commonwealth with immediate access to a larger pool of skilled shipbuilding workers that can transition across multiple projects via a 'consolidated Henderson' model. It will allow the Commonwealth to continue to leverage Austal's naval shipbuilding experience and track record of delivery for the Commonwealth, including the upcoming Landing Craft-Heavy program."



Australian government awards AU\$2 billion submarine sustainment contract to local shipyard



The Royal Australian Navy Collins-class submarine HMAS Farncomb (photo date unknown) Royal Australian Navy
[Baird Maritime](#)

Published on:

31 Jul 2024, 8:43 am

The government of Australia has entered into a new four-year, AU\$2.2 billion (US\$1.4 billion) sustainment contract with South Australia-based naval shipbuilder ASC as part of the [life-of-type extension \(LOTE\) program](#) for the Royal Australian Navy's (RAN) Collins-class diesel-electric submarines.

HMAS *Farncomb* will be the first of the RAN's six Collins-class submarines to undergo sustainment and capability enhancement under the LOTE program. The work to upgrade *Farncomb* will commence in 2026 at ASC's facilities in Osborne.

The Australian Department of Defence (DOD) said the LOTE program will ensure the future availability of the Collins-class submarines without compromising on submariner safety. The government's decisions on the LOTE program have been informed by advice from the DOD as well as independent expert advice.

One injured after massive fire breaks out at German shipyard



Lürssen's yachtbuilding facilities in March 2023 Lürssen

[Baird Maritime](#)

Published on: 03 Jul 2024, 11:46 am

One person suffered injuries after a fire ignited and quickly spread at the Schacht-Audorf yachtbuilding facilities of German shipyard Lürssen on Tuesday, July 2. The incident occurred at around 09:00 local time when the blaze ignited in one of the yard's assembly halls.

Witnesses said they heard multiple explosions as the assembly hall became engulfed in flames and black smoke. There have also been unconfirmed reports that a superyacht still under construction at the yard suffered damage from the fire.

Lürssen said in a statement that one individual was treated for minor injuries and that all shipyard personnel have been evacuated by responding firefighters and police. Fireboats were also deployed to the area, and vessel traffic along the nearby Kiel Canal was temporarily halted as a precaution.

The smoke from the fire reached the nearby city of Schacht-Audorf. This then prompted the local authorities to order the immediate evacuation of residents from a number of homes.

The assembly hall's roof and some exterior walls collapsed later in the day, as firefighters had been unable to enter the area to douse it with water due to temperatures reaching as high as 1,000 degrees Celsius. Officials assured that the fire has since been contained, though they expect smoldering to last into the next few days.

Royal Australian Navy taps local firm for new landing craft



Rendering of a Landing Craft LightThe Whiskey Project Group

[Baird Maritime](#)

Published on:

26 Jul 2024, 1:47 pm

The Royal Australian Navy has selected a new light landing craft for use by the in-service Pacific Support Vessel ADV *Reliant*. The new vessels will be designed to be faster and more capable than legacy in-service craft. Under a contract with Sydney-based The Whiskey Project Group (TWPG), the RAN will receive two all-aluminium Landing Craft Light (LCL). Deliveries of the vessels are scheduled for the first half of 2025.

With a length of 15.4 metres each, the LCLs will be larger than the RAN's long-serving Landing Craft Vehicle Personnel (LCVPs) that are often embarked on the sealift ship HMAS *Choules* and ADV *Reliant*. The LCLs are derived from a proven TWPG family of multi-purpose utility craft and will be built at the company's yard in Yamba on the north coast of New South Wales.

Each LCL will be powered by three diesel outboard engines that will deliver speeds of up to 26 knots even at full load. A bi-fold bow ramp will allow each craft to transport either a maximum of 30 personnel or 4.5 tonnes of cargo including light vehicles.

TWPG will commence construction of the LCLs in August 2024.



Wait, we have to be a two-fleet nation? Concerns mount as Beijing looks to expand Indian Ocean fleet presence

Geopolitics & Policy

25 July 2024

By: Stephen Kuper



Chinese Navy guided missile frigate Sanya (FFG 574) and guided missile destroyer Yinchuan on patrol in the western Indian Ocean.

When established in the 1980s, Australia’s “Two Ocean Policy” sought to essentially establish the nation as a “two fleet” navy capable of defending and promoting our interests in the Pacific and Indian oceans – now, with increased Chinese presence in the latter, we have to redouble our efforts.

As an island continent heavily dependent on the unmolested flow of global maritime trade, the introduction of the Two Ocean policy in 1987 was a long time coming and marked a major step change in the nation’s post-Second World War coming of age.

The policy initiated a period of unprecedented infrastructure and force structure recapitalisation and redeployment for the Royal Australian Navy, with the newly redeveloped Fleet Base West, HMAS Stirling becoming the home of the Navy’s Collins Class submarines and an increasing number of surface warships.

This decision in the waning years of the Cold War would ultimately prove prescient, as the global centre of economic, political and strategic power would begin its slow shift away from Europe and the Atlantic towards the vast, oceanic-centric environs of the Indo-Pacific.

As the global balance of power has shifted to Australia’s primary “sphere of influence”, the challenges presented by the newly emerging global and regional powers spearheaded by the People’s Republic of China, flanked by India and other emerging regional powers, including Indonesia, Pakistan, Thailand and others with their own designs and ambitions for the region, have started to impact Australia.

In response, successive Australian governments since arguably 2009, but certainly since 2016, have sought to reinforce the nation’s naval capabilities culminating in the Albanese government’s “short, sharp” [Independent Analysis into Navy’s Surface Combatant Fleet](#), which set out an ambitious plan to transform the Royal Australian Navy.

At the core of this paradigm shift is the efforts to double the size of the Navy’s surface combatant fleet to complement the nation’s future fleet of conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines and better respond to the deterioration in the Indo-Pacific’s security environment.

Yet despite the rhetoric, we have continued to see a [steady decline](#) in the nation’s naval capability, with the fleet now the [smallest and oldest](#) it has been since the Second World War, leaving major questions about the nation’s capacity to secure its interests independently across the region.

While much of the emphasis has been on the Pacific Ocean and its “tributary” seas of southeast and east Asia, the Indian Ocean continues to play an immensely important role in the nation’s economic, political and strategic security.

Highlighting this is *Australian Strategic Policy Institute* researcher Marcus Schultz in a piece titled [Australia needs a plan for a Chinese navy presence in the Indian Ocean](#), in which he established, “Australia’s defence planners should carefully weigh the risks posed to its vital maritime trade connections by a persistent Chinese naval presence in the Indian Ocean. Some precautions must be taken now, as the need to deter harassment of Australia’s critical sea lines of communication (SLOCs) in the Indian Ocean isn’t very improbable or far off.”

An urgent need for more military resources in the region

The core premise of Schultz’s argument is the growing need for an increase in Australia’s already limited existing military resources to focus upon the Indian Ocean as Beijing increases its pursuit of critical infrastructure hubs to support their own economic and strategic imperatives in the region and accordingly, the corresponding increase in Chinese naval forces in the region.

Schultz detailed this, stating, “So far, China has had limited success in acquiring shore-based replenishment capability to support its warships operating east of Somalia. But it could succeed suddenly by gaining access to key logistic bases and dual-use commercial ports in Africa, the Middle East, Southeast Asia and Indian Ocean island countries.

Going further, Schultz unpacked the rapid and accelerating rate of [Chinese naval expansion](#) that is set to fundamentally reshape the balance of power in the Indian Ocean region, saying, “Meanwhile, upgrades to the Chinese naval fleet make it increasingly suited to distant operations. Larger, multirole combatants with advanced anti-ship, anti-air and anti-submarine weapons and sensors have replaced obsolescent, generally single-purpose ships. According to a *2020 China Maritime Studies Institute* report, China has more than 100 warships and submarines that can operate in the Indian Ocean. This figure is likely to rise as the Chinese navy expands its surface combatant fleet to 435 ships by 2030.”

Yet despite this new reality, Australia appears to still be dragging its feet when it comes to modernising and recapitalising its naval capabilities following years of reviews, strategic updates, force structure plans and white papers.

For reference, as it stands, Australia only has three, yes three “Tier One” surface combatants, those being the Hobart Class guided missile destroyers with seven Anzac Class frigates serving in the “Tier Two” surface combatant role.

Adding pressure on these limited platforms is the broader realignment of global and regional power, something Schultz detailed, explaining, “If relations with the United States keep declining and if the US-Indian security relationship continues to improve, China will worry about its sea lines of communication. It could respond by deploying many ships to the Indian Ocean. The same deployment would threaten Australia’s SLOCs.”

Relearning an old lesson

The logical conclusion from such a threat to the nation’s economic prosperity and strategic security seems to be a lesson we have to relearn following the sinking of the HMAS *Sydney* during the Second World War and requires major recalibration in the way the nation responds to these challenges.

Unfortunately however, little appears to be changing on this front, at least in the [materiel context](#).

For Schultz, diplomacy provides an important mechanism for offsetting our significant lack of naval capability, particularly our relationship with the United States (as is expected) and the burgeoning partnership with India.

Schultz stated, “Some ways of strengthening Australia’s Indian Ocean defence cooperation can be inexpensive ... Opportunities include the placement of more defence attaches in missions in the region – including the Australian high commission in the Republic of Maldives – and establishing relationships between ADF Reserve units and small island states. The [US State Partnership Program](#), which facilitates cooperation on civil-military affairs, could act as a model to inform the structure, shape and role of an Australian initiative.”

Diplomacy isn’t the only mechanism for Australia to enhance its Indian Ocean security, with history providing some unique insights and clues to enhance the nation’s capability in region, something Schultz explained, saying, “Australian military leaders and Defence planners should also look to improve proficiency in shipping protection and, if the work hasn’t been done already, develop a suite of maritime trade routing plans. They can look to successful strategies in Australian history, as discussed during the [2019 Goldrick Seminar](#) on *Maritime Trade and its Implications for Australia’s Defence*. One example given then was Australia’s experience instituting a convoying regimen during World War II to protect Australian merchant shipping against German surface, air and sub-surface (including mining) attack.”

Despite this, Australia will still need to enhance and increase the scale and scope of the naval capability it can bring to bear in the Indian Ocean, two areas that Schultz overestimates the importance of diplomacy is in the relationship with India and it's reliability should its interests not be directly impacted. Schultz detailed these factors, saying, "Australia won't have to meet potential mid-Indian Ocean security concerns alone, thanks to increasing security cooperation with India and Britain and the alliance with the United States."

Beijing has, despite the history of tensions between the two superpowers, increasingly sought to offset India's relationship with the West, by working with India to enhance the economic relationship between the two nations within the confines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and BRICS multilateral trading bloc.

Equally, Schultz made a dangerous assumption that the United Kingdom will be able to support maritime security in the Indian Ocean, seemingly without accounting for the now well-known limitations on the Royal Navy or for that matter, more pressing maritime security challenges in the North Atlantic.

While the government's plan to expand the Royal Australian Navy's surface fleet is now public knowledge, it remains to be seen when the rubber will actually hit the road and whether or not it is enough to contribute to the nation's maritime security and unmolested access to critical sea lines of communication upon which our modern standard of living and quality of life depends.

Ultimately, if we don't turn this ship around (pun massively intended), Australia is going to face some major challenges and impacts to our national security, prosperity and national stability.

Final thoughts

While contemporary Australia has been far removed from the harsh realities of conflict, with many generations never enduring the reality of rationing for food, energy, medical supplies or luxury goods, and even fewer within modern Australia understanding the sociopolitical and economic impact such rationing would have on Australia's standard and quality of life.

There is no doubt that Australia's position and responsibilities in the Indo-Pacific region will depend on the nation's ability to sustain itself economically, strategically, and politically in the face of rising regional and global competition. At the forefront of this is the nation's seemingly declining capacity to defend itself both independently and in concert with our regional and global partners, raising an important question worth asking: If we don't take our own defence seriously, how can we expect anyone else to?

Ultimately, this comes back to the government's shift away from a "Balanced Force" towards a "Focused Force" as championed in the Defence Strategic Review and the foundational problem that is our lack of clearly defined role and objectives for our own Defence capabilities.

In the maritime domain, this is of paramount importance as identified by David Uren, writing for the [Australian Strategic Policy Institute](#), that "two-thirds of Australia's exports by value and a little over 40 per cent of its imports by value travelling through the Indonesian archipelago. About 6 per cent of exports go east across the Pacific Ocean to New Zealand, the Pacific islands and North or South America, while about 13 per cent of imports come from the east".

Uren added, "Only about 4 per cent of Australia's maritime trade travels west across the Indian Ocean without going through Indonesian waters, bound for India, the Middle East or the Suez Canal. Of the Australian exports that enter Indonesian waters, about 73 per cent are headed for North Asia (principally iron ore and LNG), while 17 per cent have destinations in Southeast Asia, and 10 per cent are en route for India, the Middle East or Europe. Among the imports coming through the Indonesian straits, about 11 per cent come from North Asia, and a little over 40 per cent from each of Southeast Asia and Europe."

Importantly, no one has said that defending the nation in this era of renewed and increasingly capable great power competition will be cheap or easy and we have to accept that uncomfortable reality, because the alternative outcome is infinitely worse.

Get involved with the discussion and let us know your thoughts on Australia's future role and position in the Indo-Pacific region and what you would like to see from Australia's political leaders in terms of partisan and bipartisan agenda get in touch at Stephen.kuper@momentummedia.com.au or at editor@defenceconnect.com.au.

Probe reveals GPS failure nearly caused ship grounding in Great Barrier Reef in 2022



Lady Musgrave Island, Great Barrier ReefPixabay.com

[Baird Maritime](#)

Published on:

26 Jul 2024, 3:42 pm

A bulk carrier came within 200 metres of grounding in the Great Barrier Reef after a GPS unit on board the ship began providing false information to the pilot and crew on board, an Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) final report details.

The near grounding occurred early on the morning (local time) of May 4, 2022, when the 225-metre bulk carrier *Rosco Poplar* was transiting Hydrographers Passage under the conduct of a coastal pilot. Unknown to the pilot and crew, one of the ship's three GPS units began outputting incorrect positional data during the early stages of the pilotage, likely due to an antenna malfunction.

The ship's position was then incorrectly displayed on the ship's navigational equipment, including the electronic chart display and information system (ECDIS), radars, and automatic identification system (AIS).

As the ship came within 200 metres of Bond Reef, where normal clearance was about 1,500 metres, the pilot suddenly noticed a reef sector light indicating red. This was followed by the activation of an alert from the ship's electronic navigational equipment.

The pilot ordered a heading change and the ship's course was altered away from the reef. The remaining pilotage was conducted without further incident.

The investigation found the pilot and bridge team relied solely on GPS positioning to monitor the ship's progress. It also found that the pilot failed to correctly configure their portable pilot unit to be independent of the ship's position sensors. The ATSB also determined ineffective bridge resource management and ineffective pilotage contributed to the occurrence.

"An inadequate master-pilot information exchange did not establish individual roles and responsibilities for watchkeeping and communication, while the second mate was given tasks that distracted them from their duties for monitoring the passage plan, and maintaining a proper lookout," ATSB Chief Commissioner Angus Mitchell outlined. "This occurrence demonstrates the importance of the various concepts, techniques, and attitudes that together comprise effective bridge resource management."

In the course of its investigation, the ATSB also identified that the coastal pilotage check pilot system did not provide the intended competency assurance to the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA). While this did not contribute to the near-grounding incident, the ATSB identified significant variations in the application of assessment standards between individual check pilots, indicating assessment outcomes were not a valid and reliable indicator of competency.

AMSA has advised that a review of coastal pilotage under the current legislation is underway. However, the ATSB has issued AMSA with a safety recommendation to address factors limiting the effectiveness of its check pilot framework as a system for coastal pilot competency assurance.

"Compulsory coastal pilotage remains an essential defence against serious shipping accidents in the Great Barrier Reef," Mr Mitchell said. "It is therefore important that coastal pilots are up to standard – and any assessment system that assures those standards must produce consistent and accurate outcomes. If sufficient measures are not implemented to ensure assessment standards are interpreted and applied consistently – irrespective of the assessor – the outcomes are unreliable."

The investigation also identified that the vessel traffic services operator assessed an unusual grounding alert display associated with *Rosco Poplar's* GPS malfunction as erroneous.

"Consequently, the pilot and ship's crew were not provided with timely advice of the indicated proximity to Bond Reef," Mr Mitchell concluded.

Cyan Renewables acquires Australia's MMA Offshore in AU\$1.1 billion deal



MMA Offshore's multi-purpose support vessel MMA Privilege MMA Offshore

[Baird Maritime](#)

Published on:

25 Jul 2024, 11:49 am

Cyan Renewables, an offshore wind services company based in Singapore, has confirmed its acquisition of Australian offshore marine services provider MMA Offshore for AU\$1.1 billion (US\$702 million). This transaction marks the region's largest take-private deal in the offshore wind energy services industry, strengthening Cyan's position in the Asia Pacific (APAC) region.

MMA shareholders will receive AU\$2.70 (US\$1.78) per share in cash, representing a 36 per cent premium over the 90-day volume-weighted average share price, and EV EBITDA ratio stands at 6.2x. MMA's projected EBITDA is AU\$146 million to AU\$149 million for FY2024, a more than 110 per cent increase over the previous year's AU\$69.3 million.

The acquisition, which also covers MMA's 20-vessel fleet, was supported by a group of co-investors, including the Alberta Investment Management Corporation (AIMCo). AIMCo, which opened its office in Singapore in September 2023, participated in the MMA acquisition through its investment in Cyan.

Lee Keng Lin, CEO of Cyan Renewables, said the acquisition brings extensive maritime services expertise and a strong operational presence in key markets such as Australia and the broader APAC region.

Cyan plans to retain MMA's workforce, leveraging and expanding its expertise, assets, and operating model to further penetrate the offshore wind support services market globally and in Asia. In addition to supporting existing clients in the offshore energy and broader maritime industries with its marine and subsea services, Cyan will pursue growth opportunities through mergers and acquisitions and organic expansion.

'All at sea'

This everyday phrase dates back to the early age of sail, to a time before accurate navigational instruments were available.

Once a ship was out of sight of land, it was deemed to be in an unknown position - it was described as being 'at sea' and at risk of becoming lost.

It was often used during the 18th century when referring to ships that had not returned to port.

It has gradually evolved to be used in everyday language, and means to be in a state of confusion or bewilderment.





WESTERN AUSTRALIA

HMAS *Stirling* in Western Australia will continue to be the home of Australian submarines.

Western Australia will be at the forefront of the Optimal Pathway for Australia's acquisition of a conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine (SSN) capability. This will include:

- Receiving more frequent port visits from UK and US SSNs beginning later this year
- A rotational presence for UK and US SSNs – the Submarine Rotational Force-West (SRF-West) – from as early as 2027
- Housing Australia's first SSN capability – the US Virginia class submarines – from the early 2030s.

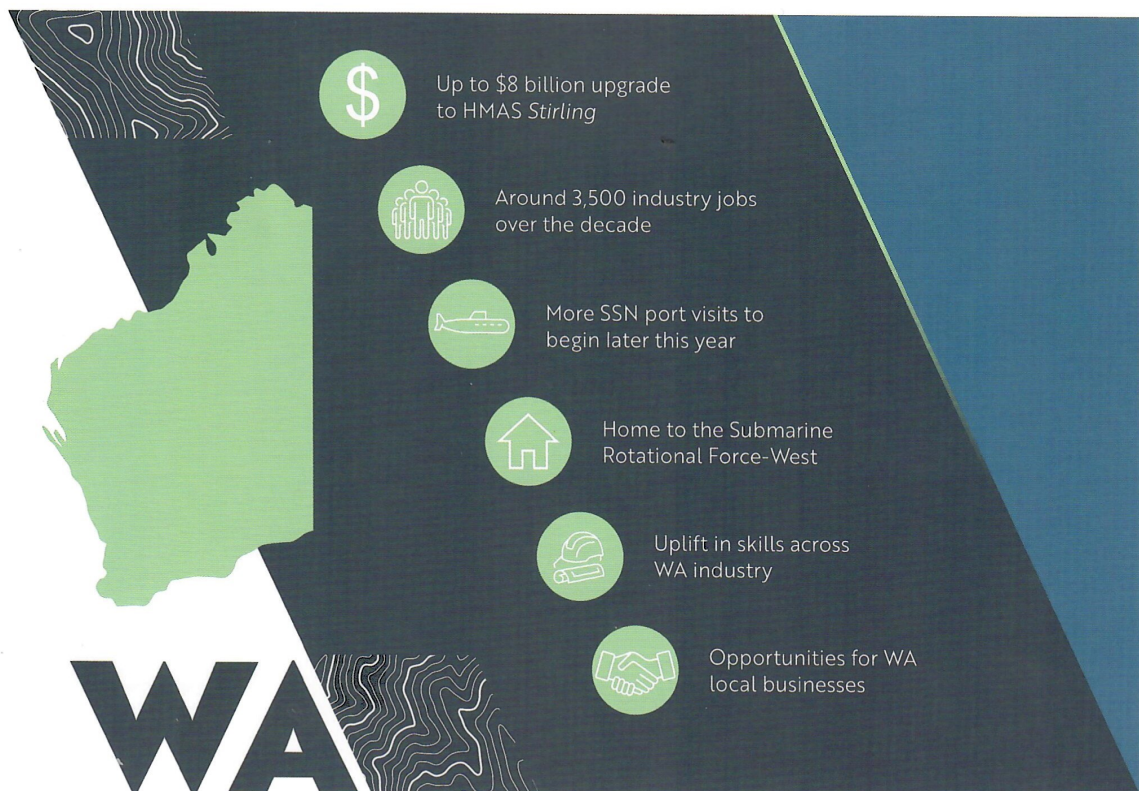
An additional 500 direct jobs are expected to be created to sustain SRF-West over the period 2027-2032.

HMAS *Stirling* will be expanded to support the scale of infrastructure required for nuclear powered submarines – both for visiting and rotational submarines and for Australia's own nuclear-powered submarines.

The Australian Government will invest up to \$8 billion over the next decade to expand HMAS *Stirling*, creating around 3,000 direct jobs, and in turn, supporting the local economy. This includes:

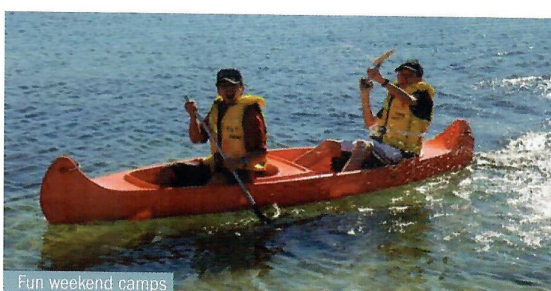
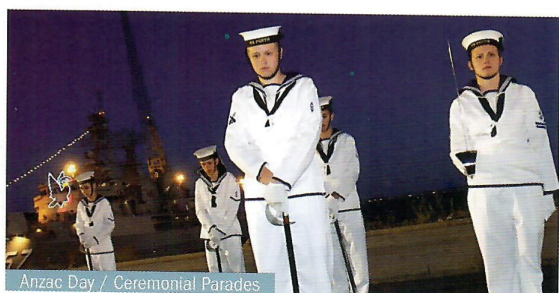
- Wharf upgrades
- Operational maintenance, logistics and training facilities
- Opportunities for supporting infrastructure outside of HMAS *Stirling*.

Western Australian education institutions will also play a key role in the development of skilling programs to support workforce growth.



WHAT ACTIVITIES WOULD I BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN AS A NAVY CADET STAFF MEMBER?

There are endless opportunities for cadet staff to be a part of with their cadets, such as.....



AUSTRALIAN NAVY CADETS

AUSTRALIAN NAVY CADETS

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF JOINING THE AUSTRALIAN NAVY CADETS AS A STAFF MEMBER?

As an Australian Navy Cadet Officer/Instructor you will hold a privileged position and one that has high community expectations. You will be able to build rapport with your cadets and be a valuable part of their growth and development as well as being a valuable part of your community.

WHAT ARE THE REWARDS OFFERED TO NAVY CADET STAFF?

Australian Navy Cadet staff receive an allowance for their service in the Australian Navy Cadets.

- » 48 days pay (taxed)
 - Approximately \$125 per day
- » Superannuation
- » Free uniforms supplied by Navy
- » Opportunity for promotion
- » Training
- » Interstate travel
- » International Travel (exchange program)
- » A huge variety of activities
- » Discount to Navy Health membership
- » DEFCOM discount shopping



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 \$25.00 (includes \$2.50GST) (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 \$50.00 (including \$5.00GST)

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	<table><tr><td>First</td><td colspan="2">Surname</td></tr></table>			First	Surname	
First	Surname					
Address						
Suburb		State	<table><tr><td></td><td>P/C</td><td></td></tr></table>		P/C	
	P/C					
Email		Phone				

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

\$	
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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

ANCCrecruiting@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

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PO Box 735 Fremantle WA 6959

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PHOTOS by LEUT David Nicolson RAN RTD
And CMDR Jim O'Neill ANC RTD>