

Australia-UK Defence Industry Dialogue: Joint Statement

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On 23 February 2026, the UK Minister for Defence Readiness and Industry, Luke Pollard MP hosted the Minister for Defence Industry of Australia, the Hon. Pat Conroy MP, for the Australia-UK Defence Industry Dialogue (AUKDID).

This meeting marked the revival of the Dialogue following the 2025 Australia-UK Ministerial Consultations (AUKMIN), recognising its importance as a dedicated forum to advance defence industry cooperation, strengthen collective industrial capability, and support delivery of AUKUS.

Ministers reaffirmed the deep and longstanding partnership between Australia and the United Kingdom, built on shared values, common strategic interests, and a mutual commitment to strengthening national resilience. Ministers also reaffirmed their enduring commitment to the generational AUKUS partnership, which is supporting security and stability in the Indo-Pacific and beyond, enhancing our collective deterrence against shared threats.

Ministers reflected that the increasingly challenging global security environment demanded closer industrial cooperation to ensure both nations can develop, produce, and sustain the advanced capabilities required to preserve peace and prevent conflict.

Advancing Capability and Technology Cooperation

Ministers welcomed progress since AUKMIN 2025 on the deepening cooperation on Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) radar technology in both nations which included exploring the potential of using Australian AESA radar technologies for the UK. They agreed to undertake a series of targeted risk reduction activities in the near future to inform future decisions.

Ministers noted Australia's invitation for the UK to observe MQ28A testing at Woomera in 2026 and agreed to explore future demonstrations in the United Kingdom. This builds on a recent successful test firing of an Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile. Ministers agreed to strengthen and advance cooperation on directed-energy weapons and software enabled planning systems for improved joint operational planning.

Strengthening Industrial Resilience and Supply Chains

Ministers reaffirmed the importance of resilient, secure and integrated defence industrial bases.

Ministers agreed to strengthen cooperation on building resilient energetics supply chains and supplying munitions and energetics to the UK. Ministers discussed cooperation on critical minerals essential to advanced defence technologies, including improved information-sharing to strengthen supply chain resilience, deepen joint research efforts, and ensure access to strategically important materials.

Noting the importance of their respective steel industries for the delivery of SSN-AUKUS, the Ministers agreed to explore options that maximise opportunities to strengthen our collective steel industrial base.

Ministers also agreed that Australia and the United Kingdom will work together to improve

frictionless defence trade between both nations, including accelerating efforts to address barriers to collaboration such as mobility, security clearances, and cyber security standards - including for AUKUS.

Ministers noted the importance of close coordination across government, acknowledging that progress in these areas will require action from agencies beyond Defence, and committed to championing this work across their respective systems to drive practical, near-term improvements for industry and capability delivery.

Supporting AUKUS Pillar I - Submarine Industrial Integration

The Ministers welcomed the arrival of HMS Anson in Perth, Western Australia. The deployment is a major step forward in the delivery of the Optimal Pathway and will support future UK submarine rotations under Submarine Rotational Force-West. It will help develop Australia's sovereign industrial capability and skills base as Australia works towards operating, maintaining and stewarding conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarines.

Ministers welcomed the expansion of Australian industrial personnel embedded at the BAE Systems Submarines Shipyard in Barrow. These placements grow the skills and experience required to build Australia's SSN-AUKUS submarines at Osborne, South Australia, and expand on existing placements of Australians into the UK MOD and industrial partners, as well as the training of around 1,000 Australian personnel by the Royal Navy for the programme.

Ministers noted progress in manufacturing reactors for both Australian and UK SSN-AUKUS submarines, underpinned by the significant measures that the UK has taken to transform its submarine building industry and Australia's investment in Raynesway submarine infrastructure and SSN-AUKUS design activities.

Ministers committed to strengthen integration of Australian and UK submarine industrial bases, to build the workforce, supply chains and capability needed to deliver SSN-AUKUS, a state-of-the-art platform designed to leverage the best technology from all three AUKUS partners.

They welcomed upcoming targeted trade missions—including an ASA-led mission aligned with the Underwater Defence Technology Tradeshow in London—and joint supply-chain activities to be held through March in Adelaide and Perth.

AUKUS Pillar II

Ministers recognised the importance of advanced capabilities development under AUKUS Pillar II and discussed opportunities to further accelerate delivery of such projects, with particular focus on near-term warfighting objectives.

Supporting Ukraine's Defence

Ministers reaffirmed the shared commitment of Australia and the United Kingdom to supporting Ukraine in its defence against Russia's aggression. Australia confirmed its support to explore UK weapons testing at Australian ranges, noting the importance of validating long-range systems that may assist Ukraine on the battlefield. Ministers agreed this cooperation demonstrates the enduring contribution both nations are making to Ukraine's sovereignty, security and resilience.

Conclusion

Ministers welcomed the strong momentum in Australia-UK defence industry cooperation and agreed that the AUKDID will remain an important forum for driving progress on shared industrial, capability and innovation objectives. They reaffirmed their commitment to working closely together to strengthen sovereign industrial capacity, promote interoperability, and deliver the advanced capabilities required to safeguard the security and prosperity of both nations. Ministers further directed their departments and encouraged relevant agencies beyond Defence to prioritise practical measures that enable deeper industry collaboration, including reforms that support mobility, streamlined approvals, and harmonised standards. They looked forward to advancing these issues over the coming months.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/australia-uk-defence-industry-dialogue-joint-statement>