

Media Releases

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# Labor's AUKUS Boost: An Australian Strategic Research Agency

with Brendan O'Connor MP & Matt Keogh MP



An Albanese Labor Government will create the Advanced Strategic Research Agency (ASRA).

ASRA will bring Australia into line with our AUKUS partners by creating a new research and development agency established within Defence to fund pivotal research in breakthrough technologies for national security.

ASRA will boost Australia's involvement in technology sharing and research and development, through the new AUKUS partnership.

It will work closely with its counterparts, the ground-breaking US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) and the newly created UK Advanced Research and Invention Agency (ARIA).

It will be a premier avenue for linking Australian industry (including SMEs) and universities with our AUKUS partners.

After almost a decade of neglect under the current Liberal Government, there has been a lack of strategic defence and national security-focused sovereign research, funding and projects. This is leaving Australia vulnerable to strategic technological surprises.

R&D spending continues to fall under Scott Morrison's watch, with Australia's overall spending as a percentage of GDP falling dramatically from 2.11 per cent in 2011-12 to 1.79 per cent in 2019-20.

Further, the current Government tried to cut over \$2 billion from the Research and Development Tax Incentive.

Australia needs to rapidly establish a strategic research agency modelled on the highly successful DARPA in the United States.

ASRA would ensure cutting-edge research from public sources, such as universities and industry, and classified research from industry and other government agencies (such as CSIRO), are supported and co-ordinated.

ASRA will also aim to leverage private investment into its research priorities. It will ensure the development of sovereign research capabilities for Australia, especially in getting prototypes to delivered technology.

DARPA's recent work includes unmanned anti-submarine vessels, sixth generation jet fighter technologies, atmospheric water extraction, reusable robotic spacecraft, hypersonics and media forensics (identifying deepfakes).

Famous commercialised projects from DARPA include the internet, the computer mouse, GPS, and Siri.

The UK has just created its version, the Advanced Research and Invention Agency (ARIA).

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