

AUKUS Partners Consider Cooperation With Japan

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The U.S., Australia and the United Kingdom, members of the AUKUS partnership, are considering cooperation with Japan on advanced capabilities projects.

An aim of AUKUS is identifying the optimal pathway for Australia to acquire conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability, as well as cooperation on a range of other advanced defense technologies.

Spotlight: AUKUS

Japan is being considered for Pillar 2, advanced technologies, because of its strengths and its close defense partnership with all three countries, said Deputy Pentagon Press Secretary Sabrina Singh, who held a press conference today.

Singh noted that this was announced in a joint statement by the three nation's defense leaders: Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III; Australian Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles, who also serves as his country's defense minister; and British Defense Secretary Grant Shapps.

Other items of recent progress, Singh noted, was Australia's selection of ASC Pty Ltd. and BAE Systems to build its submarines and its selection of ASC Pty Ltd. as Australia's submarine sustainment partner.

Also, Australia now has dozens of sailors and civilians participating in maintenance and operations training in Guam; Pearl Harbor, Hawaii; Connecticut and elsewhere, she said.

Earlier this month, the U.S. Navy awarded the first contracts for submarine training simulators to Australia, she said.

AUKUS has also made strong progress on multiple components of advanced technologies and capabilities, she said, noting that this month will be the launch of the AUKUS Advanced Capabilities Industry Forum, and last month was the inaugural AUKUS Pillar II Innovation Challenge on electronic warfare, "a collaborative initiative between respective innovation accelerator units."

Spotlight: Science & Tech

In the trilateral statement, the three countries said they seek to maximize the strategic benefits of the AUKUS partnership to support security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond.

Spotlight: Focus on Indo-Pacific

They went on to state Australia's acquisition of a conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability is a necessary response to the rapidly evolving strategic environment. Strengthening their trilateral defense capabilities and their industrial capacity will enable AUKUS partners to deter coercion or aggression in the region more effectively.