

News story

AUKUS partnership to consult with other nations including Japan on military capability collaboration

Consultations between AUKUS partners and other nations to begin this year.

From: [Ministry of Defence \(/government/organisations/ministry-of-defence\)](#) and [The Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP \(/government/people/grant-shapps\)](#)

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- Collaboration could include working together in areas such as quantum technologies, undersea capabilities, artificial intelligence (AI) and autonomy, cyber, hypersonic and counter-hypersonic capabilities, and electronic warfare capabilities.
- Australia, UK and US already have close bilateral relationships with Japan and consultation will begin with them.

AUKUS is a trilateral security and defence partnership between Australia, the UK and the US, [first announced in September 2021](#) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-statement-on-aukus-partnership-15-september-2021>). It sees the three nations work together on a range of capabilities to support a free and open Indo-Pacific, including a conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability for the UK and Australia – SSN-AUKUS – under Pillar One of the partnership.

Consultation with other countries, including Japan, as potential collaborators on some advanced military capabilities under Pillar Two of the partnership will begin this year.

Australia, the UK and US are considering Japan's potential involvement in some elements of the Pillar Two programme. Pillar Two includes quantum technologies, undersea capabilities, artificial intelligence (AI) and autonomy, cyber, hypersonic and counter-hypersonic capabilities, and electronic warfare capabilities, supported by innovation and information sharing.

Partners have always been clear on the intent to engage additional nations in Pillar Two projects as the work progresses. The potential collaborations will complement and build on the close bilateral relationships that all three AUKUS nations have with other countries.

The submarine capability is Pillar One of the AUKUS programme and will always remain a trilateral endeavour. Work is progressing at pace on the submarine programme, with [Australia appointing UK company BAE Systems](#) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-firm-appointed-to-build-australian-aukus-submarines>) last month to build its SSN-AUKUS submarines in partnership with ASC during a visit by Deputy Prime Minister Marles and Defence Secretary Grant Shapps to Osborne shipyard in Adelaide.

Defence Secretary, Grant Shapps said:

“ In a more dangerous world, relationships and partnerships like AUKUS are more important than ever.

“ We have always said we would engage additional nations in our Pillar Two work as it progresses, and collaborating with like-minded countries will strengthen the partnership further.

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“ I am committed to a peaceful, prosperous and open Indo-Pacific and to working with partners to grow our capabilities and uphold international rules and order.”

AUKUS nations will assess whether involving like-minded nations like Japan would strengthen the development of capabilities. Consultations will begin this year on where potential partners, including Japan, can contribute to and benefit from Pillar Two work.

Japan’s potential involvement was announced by UK Defence Secretary Grant Shapps, Australia Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Richard Marles and US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin today in a [joint statement \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/aukus-defence-ministers-joint-statement-april-2024/aukus-defence-ministers-joint-statement-april-2024\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/aukus-defence-ministers-joint-statement-april-2024/aukus-defence-ministers-joint-statement-april-2024).

Japan and the UK are already working together with Italy on our sixth-generation fighter jet programme, [GCAP \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/convention-on-the-establishment-of-the-global-combat-air-programme-gcap-international-government-organisation\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/convention-on-the-establishment-of-the-global-combat-air-programme-gcap-international-government-organisation), where they have proved effective partners. Last year the UK and Japan agreed a landmark new strategic partnership – [the Hiroshima accord \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-hiroshima-accord\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-hiroshima-accord).

The joint statement comes two weeks after Defence Secretary Grant Shapps and Foreign Secretary David Cameron [visited Australia \(https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-and-australia-celebrate-closer-ties-with-aukus-progress-and-new-defence-treaty\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-and-australia-celebrate-closer-ties-with-aukus-progress-and-new-defence-treaty) for meetings with their counterparts, and a year after Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, Australian Prime Minister Albanese and US President Biden met in San Diego.

The AUKUS partnership is a demonstration of the commitment of Australia, the UK, and the US to support peace, stability, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific and beyond. Engaging like-minded nations in the work of Pillar Two will only strengthen this pursuit.

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