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Rep. Courtney Marks First Day of School for Royal Australian Navy Sailors at Sub Base New London

February 20, 2024 [Press Release](#)

NORWICH, CT – Today marks the next step in the AUKUS mission as the first three Royal Australian Navy sailors begin their schooling at Submarine Base New London.

The sailors arrived in Groton, Connecticut late last week and will now begin the Submarine Officer Basic Course. This step follows their graduation from Naval Nuclear Power Training Command in July 2023 and the U.S. Navy's Nuclear Power Training Unit last month.

"It is an exciting day for the AUKUS security agreement and our community – home to America's oldest submarine base – as the first of many Royal Australian Navy sailors begin their Submarine Officer Basic Course," Courtney said. "The centerpiece of AUKUS is to create a fleet of conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarines for the Australian Navy. The threshold requirement for success is training Australia's Navy to operate these submarines. That is exactly why I led enactment of legislation in 2022 to [establish a Naval training pipeline](#). There is no better place than southeastern Connecticut for Australian personnel to skill up and become well-trained stewards of nuclear-powered submarines."

"The RAN greatly appreciate the opportunity to train our future nuclear powered submarine crews in the US and in particular the Great State of Connecticut. We also very much appreciate the support and interest shown by Representative Joe Courtney for AUKUS and Australia's acquisition in nuclear powered submarines and Alliance cooperation more broadly. Developing the Australian workforce to safely and securely own, operate, and maintain nuclear-powered submarines is an integral part of the Optimal Pathway announced nearly 12 months ago and we very much appreciate the support across the United States in getting to this great milestone," said Commodore David Frost, Australian Naval Attache to the United States.

"Over the next two months, these sailors will learn the responsibilities of leading an advanced SSN crew as a division officer, including safety, damage control, and seamanship," said Capt. Matthew Fanning, Commanding Officer, Naval Submarine School. "These sailors have already qualified aboard Australia's Collins class diesel-electric submarines and have proven their aptitude for nuclear power, so I have no doubt they will excel here as well."

About Rep. Courtney's *U.S.-Australia Submarine Officer Pipeline Act*

The bill required the Secretary of Defense to establish a training program for Royal Australian Navy submarine officers to begin training at Navy Nuclear Propulsion School and eventually be assigned to duty on an operational U.S. submarine in support of the trilateral partnership between the United States, United Kingdom,

and Australia announced by the Biden Administration last September. This provision was [adopted](#) and enacted as part of the FY23 National Defense Authorization Act.

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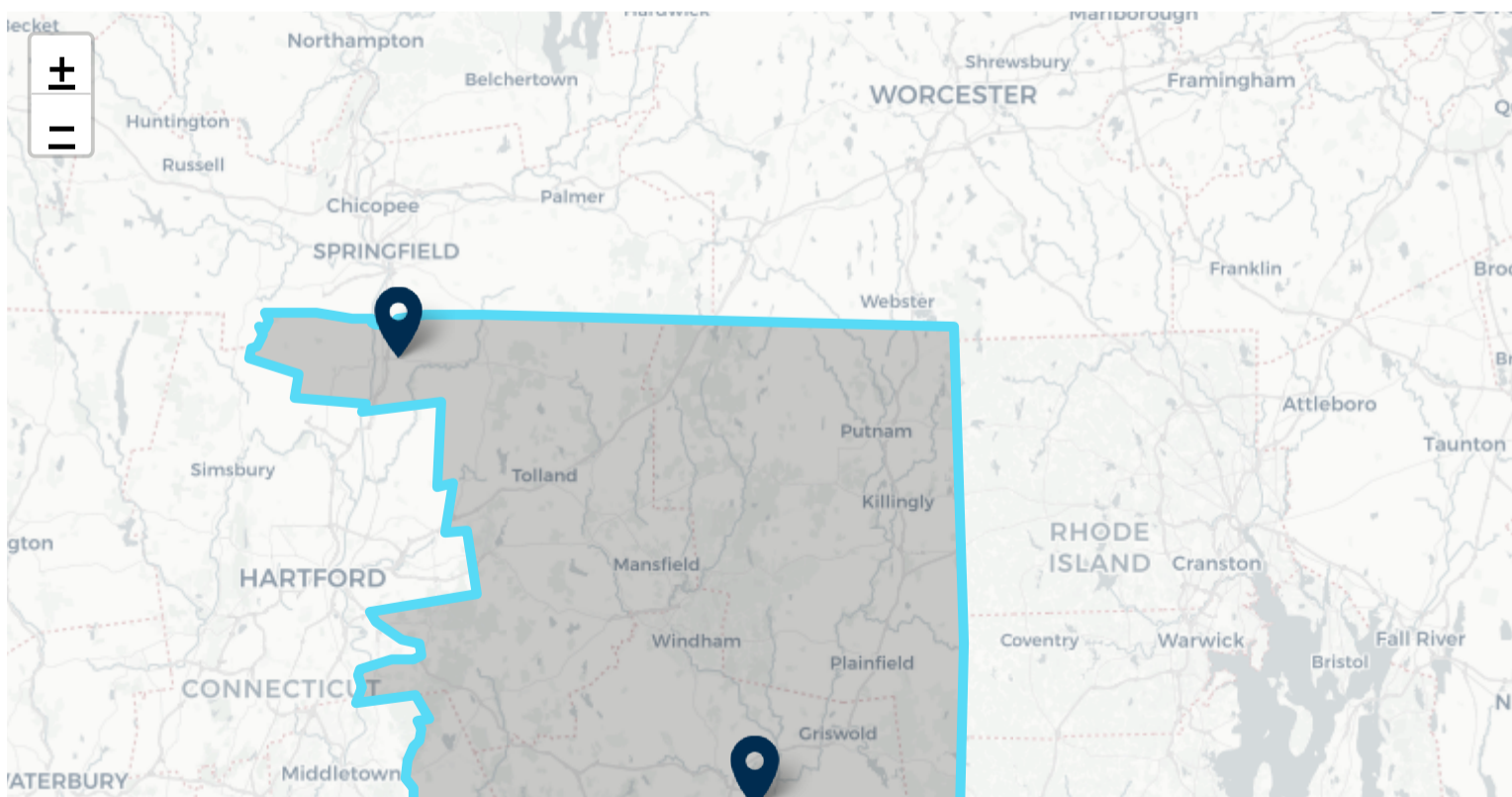
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