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APRIL 2024 UPDATE

AUKUS BRIEFING BOOK

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Security & Defence PLS deepens this partnership, advancing research, education, and policy to support statecraft in the spirit of AUKUS.

Announced in September 2021, the AUKUS partnership between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States is intended to strengthen diplomatic, security, and defence cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region by promoting closer information and technology sharing, as well as deeper integration of security and defence-related science and technology.

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PREFACE

The purpose of this briefing book is to provide the greater national security community and the public with a resource to better understand the AUKUS partnership and its many initiatives and lines of effort. This is our third edition and has been updated to reflect developments **through April 20, 2024**.

The briefing book is organised and presented to serve both novices and experienced scholar-practitioners. For the individual who is unfamiliar with the AUKUS partnership, the executive summary and other initial sections contain the most basic, essential, and important information and analysis. For the more experienced scholar or national security practitioner, later chapters serve as a comprehensive resource containing links to official primary source documents, foundational texts, and various critical analyses and related research.

As the AUKUS partnership grows and matures, we expect to update the briefing book regularly (at least annually). To make this resource more valuable, Security and Defence PLS needs your feedback. If you have a recommendation or constructive criticism to help us improve the next version, or take issue with the accuracy of any content, please email us at securitydefence@plusalliance.org.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EARLY CONTEXT

On September 15, 2021, the leaders of the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia surprised the world with the announcement of a trilateral partnership called AUKUS.¹ According to the joint statement, the AUKUS partnership sought to deepen diplomatic, security, and defence cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region by promoting deeper information and technology sharing as well as deeper integration of security and defence-related science and technology.²

Since the announcement, two key pillars of AUKUS have emerged. Pillar 1 focuses on enabling Australia to acquire nuclear-powered, conventionally-armed submarine capability, and Pillar 2 focuses on enhancing collaboration to develop and field “advanced capabilities.” Each of these pillars is described in more detail in subsequent sections.

The AUKUS announcement came as a surprise to even the most connected individuals of the national security communities in all three countries, and many experts agreed that it marked a turning point in Indo-Pacific security and the demonstrated long-term resolve of all three countries (especially Australia) to counter the influence of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and the long-term balance of military power.³

The AUKUS announcement held the attention of national and international media for two related reasons. First, the primary initiative of the partnership was an agreement between the United States and the United Kingdom to support Australia in acquiring nuclear-powered submarines for the Royal Australian Navy. The leaders made it clear that the details of such an arrangement would be negotiated over the following next 18 months, giving their governments until March 2023 to make the partnership a reality and “determine an optimal pathway forward.”⁴

This alone would have been big news, as Australia had a reputation for its commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and had, just six years earlier, embarked on a US\$66 billion defence contract with France’s Naval Group to build 12 diesel-electric submarines to replace its ageing Collins-class boats. But the second reason for the attention of national and international media was the fact that neither Australian, UK, nor US leaders had told the leaders of France about the new agreement or that it would mean the cancellation of the contract with the Naval Group, a French defence contractor partially owned by the French government.⁵

¹ Alexander Ward and Paul McLeary, “Biden Announces Joint Deal with U.K. and Australia to Counter China,” *Politico*, September 15, 2021,

<https://www.politico.com/news/2021/09/15/biden-deal-uk-australia-defense-tech-sharing-511877>.

² Joseph Biden, Boris Johnson, and Scott Morrison, “Joint Leaders Statement on AUKUS,” *The White House*, September 15, 2021,

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/09/15/joint-leaders-statement-on-aukus/>.

³ Joe Wheatley, “Fear, Honour, and AUKUS in the Indo-Pacific,” *The Strategy Bridge*, November 9, 2021, <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2021/11/9/fear-honour-and-aukus-in-the-indo-pacific>.

⁴ Biden, Johnson, and Morrison, “Joint Leaders Statement on AUKUS.”

⁵ Dusty Jones, “Why A Submarine Deal Has France At Odds With U.S., U.K. And Australia,” *NPR*, September 19, 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2021/09/19/1038746061/submarine-deal-us-uk-australia-france>.

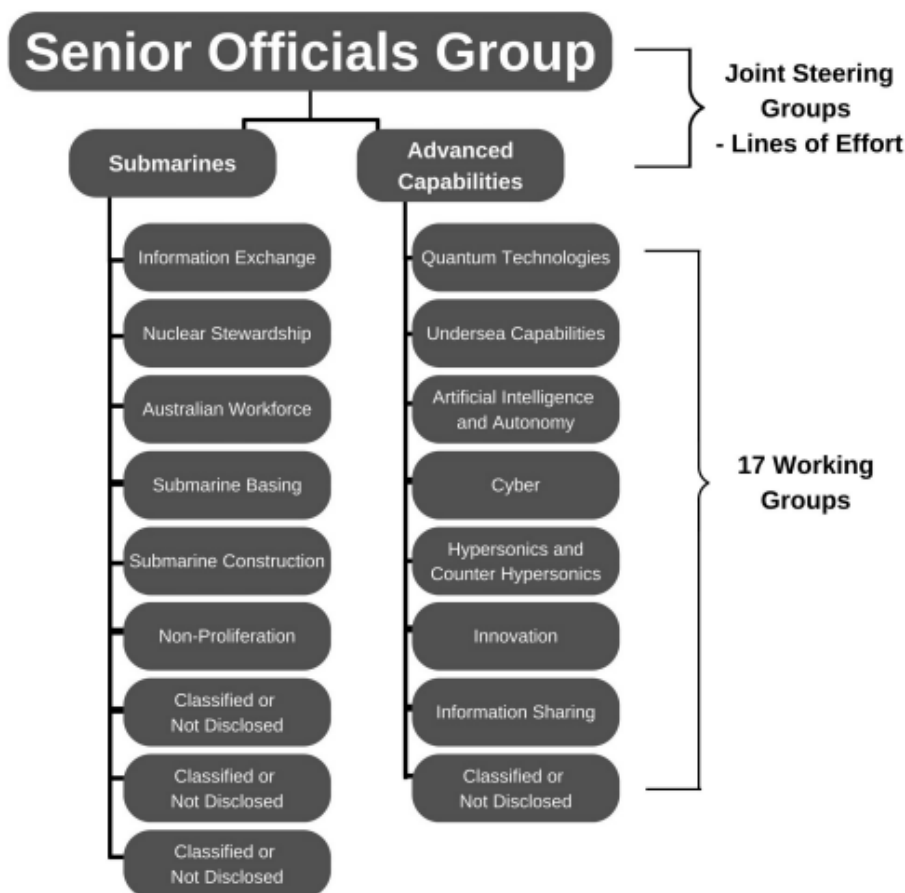


In the time since, both the Australian and US governments made real attempts to repair the damage done by the diplomatic gaffe associated with the AUKUS rollout. After France recalled its ambassadors from both Washington, DC, and Canberra, Australia, the Biden administration and the Morrison government engaged French counterparts and apologised for the oversight. Australia ended up agreeing to pay US\$584 million to France’s Naval Group in a settlement finalised by the new Australian government of Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in May of 2022.⁶

AUKUS PARTNERSHIP ORGANISATION

At this time, the AUKUS partnership has no overarching binding agreement; however, the “first initiative” of the partnership has a negotiated binding agreement that came into force on February 8, 2022, after each government completed the necessary binding actions. The official short title is the Exchange of Naval Nuclear Propulsion Information Agreement (ENNPIA).

The AUKUS partnership has a three-tiered governance framework consisting of a Senior Officials Group, two Joint Steering Groups overseeing AUKUS Pillar 1 and Pillar 2, respectively, and various working groups under each Pillar. The original structure of the working groups is shown on the diagram below:



⁶ Josh Taylor, “AUKUS Pact: Australia Pays \$830m Penalty for Ditching Non-Nuclear French Submarines,” *The Guardian*, June 11, 2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/11/aucus-pact-australia-pays-830m-penalty-for-ditching-non-nuclear-french-submarines>.

AUKUS PILLAR 1: THE “OPTIMAL PATHWAY” FOR NUCLEAR-POWERED SUBMARINES

Only six countries in the world, all of them nuclear-armed, have nuclear-powered attack submarines. Under AUKUS Pillar 1, Australia is set to join this exclusive club as the seventh member, and the only one to not possess nuclear weapons.⁷

The conventionally-armed, nuclear powered submarines (SSNs) that are a part of the AUKUS headline initiative have marked differences from diesel-powered attack submarines (SSKs). SSKs, the submarines that were a part of Australia’s original submarine deal with France’s Naval Group, have a distinct disadvantage in that they must resurface periodically to allow their batteries to recharge—an operation known as “snorting.”⁸ In comparison, SSNs’ nuclear-powered batteries need only be recharged about every fifteen years and only need to surface as crewmembers require it, enabling them to take on longer-range missions. SSNs are also much faster than SSKs. With these advantages, SSNs can both chase and run from targets, while SSKs must wait for targets to come into range.⁹ One of the first tasks for AUKUS partners was determining how to best achieve Australian SSN acquisition.

The “The AUKUS Nuclear-Powered Pathway: A Partnership for the Future” or “Optimal Pathway” for short, announced in March 2023, was developed by the AUKUS Pillar 1 Joint Steering Group over the course of 12 meetings between December 2021 and February 2023 and is the result of a trilateral study assessing methods through which Australia can acquire SSNs as quickly as possible.¹⁰ Australia will ultimately receive SSN-AUKUS, a trilaterally-developed SSN. The receipt of SSN-AUKUS will begin in phases meant to both allow the necessary time for its development and ensure Australia is capable of its operation and maintenance.¹¹

In this phased approach, the United Kingdom and United States will increase port visits to Australia with their own fleets beginning in 2023 and 2026, respectively, to increase Australian familiarity in hosting and maintaining SSNs.¹² The United States and United Kingdom will also initiate the Submarine Rotational Force-West (SRF-West) as early as 2027 at HMAS Stirling, a military base in Western Australia. This fleet will consist of a rotational presence of one UK Astute class SSN and up to four US Virginia class SSNs.

SSN-AUKUS is expected to be delivered to Australia by the early 2040s, and the period between rotational presence and Australian autonomous SSN acquisition, or the ‘submarine gap,’ will be augmented by the United States. The United States will sell Australia three Virginia class SSNs with

⁷ Sam Roggeveen, “How Nuclear Subs Could Transform Australia, Its Alliance and Asia,” *The Interpreter*, September 16, 2021,

<https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/how-nuclear-subs-could-transform-australia-its-alliance-asia>.

⁸ Sylvia Pfeifer, Demitri Sevastopulo, and Anna Gross, “The Nuclear Technology Behind Australia’s AUKUS Submarine Deal,” *The Financial Times*, September 19, 2021,

<https://www.ft.com/content/aa5c9fd5-891b-4680-b3c7-5a55d03f673c>.

⁹ Hugh White, “SSN vs SSK,” *The Interpreter*, September 29, 2021,

<https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/ssn-vs-ssk>.


¹⁰ “The AUKUS Nuclear-powered Submarine Pathway: A Partnership for the Future,” *UK Government*, March 2023,

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1142588/The_AUKUS_nuclear_powered_submarine_pathway_a_partnership_for_the_future.pdf.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² “Australia’s Nuclear-Powered Submarine Capability,” *Australian Government*, March 2023,

<https://www.asa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-06/Pathway-Factsheet.pdf>.



the potential to sell an additional two if needed, beginning in the early 2030s. This provision was authorised by the US Congress in the 2024 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which passed in December 2023.¹³ The commonality in design features of American SSNs and the future SSN-AUKUS, including similarities in propulsion plant, combat system, and weapons, will further enhance interoperability among AUKUS partners.¹⁴ The 2024 NDAA also authorises “the maintenance of US submarines by Australians in Australia,” authorises “Australian contractors to train in US shipyards to support development of its own industrial base,” and establishes “a mechanism for the United States to accept funds from Australia to lift the capacity of the submarine industrial base.”¹⁵

Two of the major goals of the Optimal Pathway are to establish Australia as a **nuclear steward** and to make this capacity **sovereign ready**. This stewardship “describes the responsible planning, operation, application and management of nuclear material, technology and facilities. As Australia will be a non-nuclear weapon state with a naval nuclear propulsion capability, stewardship will also include the implementation of appropriate safeguard arrangements as agreed between Australia and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in consultation with AUKUS partners.”¹⁶

“**Sovereign ready** is an important milestone on this Pathway. It refers to the point at which Australia has the ability to safely own, operate, maintain and regulate a sovereign conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability... Australia’s target date for achieving the ‘sovereign-ready’ milestone is the early 2030s, enabling it to acquire its first Virginia class SSN” from the United States.”¹⁷

The full Optimal Pathway document is available here for download:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1142588/The_AUKUS_nuclear_powered_submarine_pathway_a_partnership_for_the_future.pdf.

NONPROLIFERATION CONCERNS

Australian SSN acquisition has naturally raised concerns of compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This will be the first time that the United States will share nuclear technology with a foreign country since a 1958 mutual defence agreement with the United Kingdom; the United States has not otherwise shared such technology with another state since the NPT went into force in 1970.¹⁸

¹³ “Passage of Priority AUKUS Submarine and Export Control Exemption Legislation by the United States Congress,” *Australian Ministry of Defence*, December 15, 2023, <https://www.minister.defence.gov.au/media-releases/2023-12-15/passage-priority-aukus-submarine-and-export-control-exemption-legislation-united-states-congress>.

¹⁴ “FACT SHEET: Trilateral Australia-UK-US Partnership on Nuclear-Powered Submarines,” *The White House*, March 13, 2023, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/03/13/fact-sheet-trilateral-australia-uk-us-partnership-on-nuclear-powered-submarines/>.

¹⁵ “Passage of Priority AUKUS Submarine and Export Control Exemption Legislation by the United States Congress.”

¹⁶ “FACT SHEET: Trilateral Australia-UK-US Partnership on Nuclear-Powered Submarines.”

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Shayan Karbassi, “Legal Mechanisms of AUKUS Explained,” *Lawfare Blog*, September 24, 2021, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/legal-mechanisms-aukus-explained>.

The AUKUS submarine deal would see Australia become the first country to exercise a “loophole” that allows it to remove nuclear material from the inspection system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).¹⁹ One concern is how this precedent could be exploited by other non-nuclear weapons states to divert materials from naval reactors and potentially use that material for weapons production.²⁰ Another concern is that the AUKUS submarine deal may create a more permissive environment that would embolden other countries to develop their own heavily enriched uranium (HEU) fuelled nuclear submarines and their own HEU fuel.²¹ HEU, or uranium enriched greater than 20%, is needed for the development of nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons generally require enrichment levels of at least 80%—although an actor’s ability to meet this threshold is far easier after reaching the 20% enrichment mark.²²

Both the US and UK submarine fleets use HEU to power their SSNs. HEU, compared to low enriched uranium (LEU), also has a much longer lifespan. The Virginia class HEU lasts for 33 years—the life of the submarine—while submarines using LEU must be refuelled every one to three years.²³

In recognition of these concerns, AUKUS partners completed an 18 month consultation period with the IAEA, the international organisation tasked with NPT regulation and compliance. The Optimal Pathway was thus designed to meet the IAEA’s technical objectives of: 1) verifying no diversion of nuclear material, 2) no misuse of nuclear facilities, and 3) no undeclared nuclear material or activity in Australia. Committed to maintaining the NPT, the AUKUS partners committed that Australia, as a non-nuclear weapons state at the time of its signature, does not currently nor will it seek to acquire nuclear weapons. Australia further committed to declaring all nuclear materials and activity to the IAEA throughout the implementation of the Optimal Pathway.²⁴

AUKUS PILLAR 2: ADVANCED CAPABILITIES

To develop and field advanced capabilities, the three AUKUS countries have specified and engaged in a suite of cooperative activities under the name of AUKUS Pillar 2. While the structure of Pillar 2 efforts has flexed a little since the initial AUKUS announcement, Pillar 2 activities are now being conducted by eight working groups, six of which address technological areas (Undersea Capabilities, Quantum Technologies, Artificial Intelligence and Autonomy, Advanced Cyber, Hypersonic and

¹⁹ James Acton, “Why the AUKUS Submarine Deal Is Bad for Nonproliferation—And What to Do About It,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, September 21, 2021, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2021/09/21/why-aucus-submarine-deal-is-bad-for-nonproliferation-andwhat-to-do-about-it-pub-85399>.

²⁰ Cathy Moloney, “AUKUS and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Regime,” *The Interpreter*, September 28, 2021, <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/aucus-and-nuclear-non-proliferation-regime>.

²¹ Trevor Findlay and Frank N. von Hippel, “The Australia-UK-U.S. Submarine Deal,” *Arms Control Today*, Volume 51, Number 9, November 2021, <https://sgs.princeton.edu/sites/default/files/2021-11/vonhippel2021-aucus.pdf>.

²² “Nuclear 101: Uranium Enrichment,” *Nuclear Threat Initiative*, 2023, <https://tutorials.nti.org/nuclear-101/uranium-enrichment/#:~:text=Uranium%20enriched%20to%20more%20than%20required%20to%20build%20a%20bomb>.

²³ Anastasia Kapetas, “Limiting the Nuclear-Proliferation Blowback from the AUKUS Submarine Deal,” *The Strategist*, September 21, 2021, <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/limiting-the-nuclear-proliferation-blowback-from-the-aucus-submarine-deal/>.

²⁴ “The AUKUS Nuclear-powered Submarine Pathway: A Partnership for the Future,” *UK Government*, March 2023, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1142588/The_AUKUS_nuclear_powered_submarine_pathway_a_partnership_for_the_future.pdf.

Counter-hypersonic Capabilities, and Electronic Warfare) and the other two of which address broader functional area (Innovation and Information Sharing).²⁵

The following links provide more detailed information from US government resources on the six technological areas:

- *Undersea Capabilities*: <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/weapons/R45757.pdf>
- *Quantum Technologies*: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF11836>
- *Artificial Intelligence and Autonomy*: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R47644>
- *Advanced Cyber*: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF10537>
- *Hypersonic and Counter-hypersonic Capabilities*:
<https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R45811/35>
- *Electronic Warfare*: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF11118/13>

EXPORT CONTROL REFORMS

Pillar 1 and 2 activities may require the transfer of items, technologies, and information via Foreign Military Sales and/or government-issued export licences for Direct Commercial Sales. In the United States, these processes are governed by the Arms Export Control Act, which is administered through International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) and the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

While intended to function as a protection mechanism against adversaries, experts have argued that ITAR presents a significant challenge to the success of AUKUS and have recommended reforms, such as the authorization of the licence-free transfer of eligible unclassified and classified ITAR-controlled defence articles and defence services as well as eligible re-exports and re-transfers only between and among the three AUKUS countries.²⁶

In 2023, bills were introduced in the US Congress targeted at reforming ITAR to ease AUKUS-related collaboration, including the KOALA Act (H.R.4716) and BRITS Act (H.R.4715), which aimed to exempt Australia and the United Kingdom from ITAR, respectively.²⁷

Then in December 2023, the US Congress passed the 2024 National Defence Authorization Act (NDAA), which includes three key export control-related provisions. First, the NDAA allows “the transfer of controlled goods and technology between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States without the need for an export licence.”²⁸ It also “directs expedited decision-making for Foreign Military Sales and exports not covered by the national exemption” and “adds Australia and the United Kingdom to Title III of the US Defense Production Act.”²⁹


²⁵ Patrick Parrish and Luke A. Nicastro, “AUKUS Pillar 2: Background and Issues for Congress,” *Congressional Research Service*, June 20, 2023, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R47599/2>

²⁶ Tom Corben and Bill Greenwalt, “Breaking the Barriers: Reforming US Export Controls to Realise the Potential of AUKUS,” *United States Studies Centre*, May 17, 2023, <https://www.ussc.edu.au/breaking-the-barriers-reforming-us-export-controls-to-realise-the-potential-of-aukus>.

²⁷ Bill Greenwalt, “Two Years On, Is the AUKUS Agreement at the Brink of Failure?” *Breaking Defense*, September 14, 2023, <https://breakingdefense.com/2023/09/two-years-on-is-the-aukus-agreement-at-the-brink-of-failure/>.

²⁸ “Passage of Priority AUKUS Submarine and Export Control Exemption Legislation by the United States Congress.”

²⁹ *Ibid.*



In March 2024, Australia passed its Defence Trade Controls Amendment Bill 2024, which amends Australia’s defence export control framework to provide a national exemption to the United Kingdom and the United States from Australia’s export control permit requirements.

As a promising step forward for US implementation of the provisions approved in the FY2024 NDAA, in April 2024, the US Commerce Department’s Bureau of Industry and Security released an interim final rule that “significantly reduc[es] licensing requirements for Australia and the United Kingdom (UK) to foster defence trade and technological innovation,” which it anticipates “will reduce licensing burdens for trade with Australia and the UK by over 1,800 total licences valued at over \$7.5 billion per year.”³⁰

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The following chapters contain critical primary source material regarding the AUKUS partnership.

Chapter 1 – Joint Statements and Official Documents: This section provides a comprehensive collection of statements and documents issued jointly by the three governments related to AUKUS.

Chapter 2 – Australia Official Statements and Documents: This chapter contains public-facing material from the Australian government related to AUKUS.

Chapter 3 – United Kingdom Official Statements and Documents: This chapter contains public-facing material from the UK government related to AUKUS.

Chapter 4 – United States Official Statements and Documents: This chapter contains public-facing material from the U.S. government related to AUKUS.

Chapter 5 – International Official Statements and Documents: This chapter contains documents and statements from non-AUKUS countries on their reactions to AUKUS announcements. It also contains documents from the International Atomic Energy Agency on the relationship between the AUKUS nuclear submarine deal and nuclear nonproliferation.

Chapter 6 – Notable News and Commentary: This chapter includes a selection of noteworthy news articles and commentary on major AUKUS developments and issues from experts in all three AUKUS member countries, as well as from countries across the region and the world, and is organised into several thematic areas, including reactions to AUKUS; its strategic implications; progress, challenges, and perspectives on its two Pillars; and relevant commentary on export controls, workforce development, and nuclear nonproliferation.

Chapter 7 – Glossary

³⁰ “Commerce Significantly Streamlines Export Controls For Australia And The United Kingdom Advances Goals Of The Aukus Enhanced Trilateral Security Partnership,” US Commerce Department, April 18, 2024, <https://www.bis.gov/press-release/commerce-significantly-streamlines-export-controls-australia-and-united-kingdom>


CHAPTER 1 - JOINT STATEMENTS AND OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

This chapter contains links to statements and official documents issued jointly by the three governments related to the AUKUS partnership. Together they represent the coordinated public face of this partnership. Where the same joint statements or documents were simultaneously published by the different AUKUS governments, we have included just one instance of the statement or document to avoid unnecessary duplication.

The statements linked below represent both trilateral as well as bilateral partnership announcements and include the initial announcement of AUKUS in September 2021, subsequent anniversary announcements, the release of the AUKUS “Optimal Pathway” in March 2023, the official State visit of Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese to the United States in October 2023, and AUKUS Defence Ministerial updates and joint statements.

The latest joint statements, published in March and April 2024, summarised a number of important updates and future plans to advance Pillar 1 and Pillar 2, including:

- Australia’s planned investment of AUD\$18 billion in infrastructure upgrades to enable the Optimal Pathway, the United States’ planned investment of US\$11.4 billion in its submarine industrial base, and the United Kingdom’s planned investment of £3 billion into its Defence Nuclear Enterprise to support delivery of SSN-AUKUS;
- Selection of the Australian Submarine Corporation (ASC) and BAE Systems to build the SSN-AUKUS submarines for the Royal Australian Navy, and for ASC to serve as its nuclear-powered submarine sustainment partner;
- The March 2024 visit by USS Annapolis to HMAS Stirling in Australia, and preparations to support a major US SSN maintenance activity in the second half of 2024;
- Various military and industry submarine personnel training milestones;
- Several key export control reform updates, including:
 - The December 2023 passage of the US FY2024 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which included a pathway to provide export exemptions to Australia and the United Kingdom;
 - The March 2024 passage of the Australia Defence Trade Controls Amendment Act 2024 that provides reciprocal exemptions to the the United States and United Kingdom;
 - The United Kingdom’s intention to reform its Open General Export License Program to provide reciprocal exemptions to Australia and the United States;
- The March 2024 announcement of the first Pillar 2 Innovation Challenge;

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- Initial convenings of the Defence Investors Network and AUKUS Advanced Capabilities Industry Forum;
 - Release of a Statement of Intent to develop land contributions to AUKUS Pillar 2;
 - Announcement of the AUKUS nations' intent to consider Pillar 2 collaborations with Japan on a project-by-project basis.

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- 1.1 - [Exchange of Naval Nuclear Propulsion Information Agreement \(ENNPIA\)](#), September 15, 2021
 - 1.2 - [Joint Leaders Statement on AUKUS](#), September 15, 2021
 - 1.3 - [Remarks by President and Prime Ministers](#), September 15, 2021
 - 1.4 - [Readout of AUKUS Joint Steering Group Meetings](#), December 17, 2021
 - 1.5 - [AUKUS Leaders' Level Statement](#), April 5, 2022
 - 1.6 - [Fact Sheet: Implementation of the AUKUS Partnership](#), April 6, 2022
 - 1.7 - [Readout of AUKUS Joint Steering Group Meetings](#), July 31, 2022
 - 1.8 - [Joint Leadership Statement to Mark One Year Anniversary of AUKUS](#), September 23, 2022
 - 1.9 - [Joint Statement on AUSMIN Consultations](#), December 6, 2022
 - 1.10 - [AUKUS Defense Ministerial Joint Statement](#), December 7, 2022
 - 1.11 - [Joint Statement on AUKMIN Consultations](#), February 2, 2023
 - 1.12 - [Joint Leaders Statement on the Optimal Pathway](#), March 13, 2023
 - 1.13 - [Remarks by President Biden and Prime Minister Anthony Albanese of Australia Before Bilateral Meeting](#), March 13, 2023
 - 1.14 - [Fact Sheet: Trilateral Australia-UK-US Partnership on Nuclear-Powered Submarines \(Optimal Pathway\)](#), March 13, 2023
 - 1.15 - [Remarks by President Biden, Prime Minister Albanese of Australia, and Prime Minister Sunak of the United Kingdom on the AUKUS Partnership](#), March 13, 2023
 - 1.16 - [The AUKUS Nuclear-powered Submarine Pathway: A Partnership for the Future \(Optimal Pathway\)](#), March 14, 2023
 - 1.17 - [Joint Leaders Statement on the Optimal Pathway \(Detailed\)](#), March 14, 2023
 - 1.18 - [Australia-United States Joint Leaders' Statement](#), May 20, 2023
 - 1.19 - [Joint Statement on AUSMIN Consultations](#), July 29, 2023

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- 1.20 - [Joint Leadership Statement to Mark Two Year Anniversary of AUKUS](#), September 15, 2023
- 1.21 - [Fact Sheet: Delivering on the Next Generation of Innovation and Partnership with Australia](#), October 25, 2023
- 1.22 - [U.S.–Australia Joint Leaders’ Statement: Building an Innovation Alliance](#), October 25, 2023
- 1.23 - [Remarks by Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and U.S. President Joe Biden in Joint Press Conference](#), October 25, 2023
- 1.24 - [Remarks by President Biden and Prime Minister Anthony Albanese of Australia](#), October 26, 2023
- 1.25 - [AUKUS Defense Ministers Meeting Joint Statement](#), December 1, 2023
- 1.26 - [AUKUS Defense Ministerial Joint Statement](#), December 7, 2023
- 1.27 - [Nuclear Safeguards: AUKUS Statement to the IAEA Board of Governors](#), March 6, 2024
- 1.28 - [Australia's Naval Nuclear Propulsion: AUKUS Update to IAEA Board of Governors](#), March 8, 2024
- 1.29 - [U.S., Australian, British Land Chiefs Address Security Agreement's Progress](#), March 12, 2024
- 1.30 - [AUKUS Trilateral Statement](#), March 21, 2024
- 1.31 - [Joint Statement on AUKMIN Consultations](#), March 22, 2024
- 1.32 - [AUKUS Defense Ministers' Joint Statement](#), April 8, 2024

CHAPTER 2 – AUSTRALIA OFFICIAL STATEMENTS AND DOCUMENTS

Australian official documents reflect the political debate in the Australian Parliament along with efforts of its Department of Defence and are listed below. Australia is widely seen as the primary beneficiary of the AUKUS partnership. In essence, Australia has the most to gain and the most to lose in the arrangement. The loss of the sunk expenditure on the Naval Group submarine contract, the potential cost of nuclear-powered submarines, and the significant timeline to delivery, coupled with the related submarine capability gap, all make AUKUS a significant political issue in Australia.

Australia's participation in and support for AUKUS, however, has persevered through changes in government and party control. When the Australian Labor Party, led by Anthony Albanese, won the Australian federal election in May 2022, it had already endorsed in principle the AUKUS partnership agreed by Prime Minister Scott Morrison's coalition Government on the basis that the arrangement was compatible with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and Australia would not pursue nuclear weapons—a position it has reemphasised since.³¹ AUKUS, however, did attract trenchant and widely publicised criticism from former Australian Labor Prime Minister, Paul Keating, as well as concerns and questions from other former Australian Government officials. Prime Minister Albanese and his ministers were, nonetheless, able to secure an emphatic endorsement of the AUKUS partnership at the 49th National Conference of the Australian Labor Party August 2023.³²

The AUKUS partnership has also enjoyed strong bipartisan support from members of the major parties in the Australian Parliament. However, a significant group of legislators expressed doubts in late 2023 about the United States' ability to build enough submarines to meet its own needs, let alone Australia's. Also worrying the Australian Government in late 2023 were the slow progress in changing the US export control regime to enable the sale of submarines and fast-tracking the joint development of weapons, in addition to uncertainty about the upcoming US 2024 presidential election and whether that might impact AUKUS.

At least some of these concerns were addressed with the passage of the US 2024 National Defense Authorization Act, which authorised several critical provisions for enabling AUKUS.³³ On March 27, 2024, Australia passed its own bill, the Defence Trade Controls Amendment Bill 2024, which amends Australia's defence export control framework to provide a national exemption to the United Kingdom and the United States from Australia's export control permit requirements.³⁴


In parallel with these export control reform efforts, the Australian Government announced in March 2024 that it had selected the Australian Submarine Corporation (ASC) and BAE Systems to build the SSN-AUKUS submarines, and for ASC to serve as its nuclear-powered submarine sustainment partner. On the heels of that announcement, the Government also released its 2024 National Defence

³¹ "Statement by the Leader of the Opposition, Anthony Albanese, with Senator Penny Wong & Brendan O'Connor on the AUKUS Partnership," *anthonyalbanese.com*, September 16, 2021, <https://anthonyalbanese.com.au/media-centre/aukus-partnership-statement>.

³² "Remarks on AUKUS to ALP National Conference," *Prime Minister of Australia*, August 18, 2023, <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/remarks-aukus-alp-national-conference>.

³³ "Passage of Priority AUKUS Submarine and Export Control Exemption Legislation by the United States Congress," *Australian Ministry of Defence*, December 15, 2023, <https://www.minister.defence.gov.au/media-releases/2023-12-15/passage-priority-aukus-submarine-and-export-control-exemption-legislation-united-states-congress>.

³⁴ "Defence Trade Controls Amendment Bill 2024," *Parliament of Australia*, March 27, 2024, https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Bills_LEGislation/Bills_Search_Results/Result?bId=r7121.



Strategy and 2024 Integrated Investment Program in March, which outlined planned investments of AU\$63-76 billion in undersea warfare over next decade (to include conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines), among several AUKUS-relevant notables.

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- 2.1 - [Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Joint Statement on AUKUS](#), September 16, 2021
- 2.2 - [Australia National Interest Analysis](#), November 22, 2021
- 2.3 - [Report 199 - Australian Parliament](#), December 2021
- 2.4 - [Australian Government Brochures](#), 2021-2022
- 2.5 - [Media Release by the Hon Anthony Albanese Prime Minister on Australian Strategic Research Agency](#), April 28, 2022
- 2.6 - [Statement by the Hon Penny Wong, Minister for Foreign Affairs, ‘AUKUS Won’t Undermine Australia’s Stance Against Nuclear Weapons’](#), January 23, 2023
- 2.7 - [Joint Media Statement by the Western Australian Government - Western Australia Home for Australia's First Nuclear-powered Submarines](#), March 14, 2023
- 2.8 - [Optimal Pathway Fact Sheet, Australian Submarine Agency](#), March 2023
- 2.9 - [Joint Media Release, Richard Marles, Minister for Defence and Anthony Albanese, Prime Minister - AUKUS Nuclear-powered Submarine Pathway](#), March 14, 2023
- 2.10 - [Statement by the Prime Minister, the Hon. Anthony Albanese and the Minister for Defence, the Hon. Richard Marles - AUKUS Submarine Workforce and Industry Strategy](#), March 14, 2023
- 2.11 - [Joint Media Release from Ministers for Defence, Foreign Affairs, Defence Industry, Skills and Training, and Education - Commonwealth and South Australia Sign Submarine Cooperation Agreement](#), March 15, 2023
- 2.12 - [Media Transcript from Minister for Defence Industry - AUKUS Agreement and the Hunter Defence Industry](#), March 20, 2023
- 2.13 - [Statement by the Anthony Albanese, Prime Minister and Richard Males, Minister for Defence - Release of Australia’s Defence Strategic Review](#), April 24, 2023
- 2.14 - [Australia’s National Defence: Defence Strategic Review 2023](#), April 2023
- 2.15 - [Joint Media Release from Ministers for Defence, Education, Skills and Training, Defence Industry, and the Pacific - New Investment in Skills Paves the Way for AUKUS Workforce](#), May 16, 2023

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- 2.16 - [Media Release by Australian Ministry of Defence - AUKUS Partners Demonstrate Advanced Capabilities AI Trial](#), May 26, 2023
- 2.17 - [Defence Legislation Amendment - Naval Nuclear Propulsion Bill 2023](#), June 22, 2023
- 2.18 - [Statement by Australian Submarine Agency - New Agency to Oversee Acquisition of Nuclear-powered Submarines](#), July 6, 2023
- 2.19 - [Article by Australian Submarine Agency - HMAS Stirling welcomes USS North Carolina](#), August 4, 2023
- 2.20 - [Joint Statement by the Minister for Defence, Richard Marles and the Minister for Education, Jason Clare - 4,000 More Uni Places for AUKUS Workforce](#), September 1, 2023
- 2.21 - [Media Release by Australian Ministry of Defence - Australian Industry Learning Nuclear-powered Submarines in the UK](#), November 4, 2023
- 2.22 - [Media Release by Australian Ministry of Defence - Uncrewed Undersea Capabilities Strengthen AUKUS Partnership](#), November 10, 2023
- 2.23 - [Statement by Australian Ministry of Defence - Defence Trade Controls Amendment Bill 2023](#), November 30, 2023
- 2.24 - [Media Release by Australian Ministry of Defence - New Legislation to Unlock Billions of Dollars for AUKUS Industry Partners](#), November 30, 2023
- 2.25 - [Media Release by Australian Ministry of Defence - Australian Hull Steel for Australian SSN-AUKUS Nuclear-powered Submarines](#), December 9, 2023
- 2.26 - [Media Release by Australian Ministry of Defence - Visit to the United States for Defence Industry Talks and Annual Ministerial Development Dialogue](#), December 10, 2023
- 2.27 - [Media Release by Australian Ministry of Defence - Passage of Priority AUKUS Submarine and Export Control Exemption Legislation by the United States Congress](#), December 15, 2023
- 2.28 - [Joint Statement on Australia – New Zealand Ministerial Consultations \(ANZMIN\) 2024](#), February 1, 2024
- 2.29 - [Enhanced Lethality Surface Combatant Fleet - Independent Report on Australia's Surface Fleet](#), February 22, 2024
- 2.30 - [AUKUS Build and Sustainment Partners Announced](#), March 22, 2024

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- 2.31 - [Australian Industry and Jobs Front and Centre of AUKUS Submarines](#), March 22, 2024
- 2.32 - [Landmark Legislation to Bolster National Security and Remove Red Tape for Australian Industry](#), March 27, 2024
- 2.33 - [Defence Trade Controls Amendment Act 2024 Release](#), March 27, 2024
- 2.34 - [Defence Trade Controls Amendment Bill 2024](#), March 27, 2024
- 2.35 - [Australian Company Integrates into US Nuclear-Powered Submarine Supply Chain](#), April 12, 2024
- 2.36 - [2024 National Defence Strategy Release](#), April 17, 2024
- 2.37 - [2024 National Defence Strategy](#), April 17, 2024
- 2.38 - [2024 National Defence Strategy Factsheet](#), April 17, 2024
- 2.39 - [2024 Integrated Investment Program Summary](#), April 17, 2024
- 2.40 - [2024 Integrated Investment Program](#), April 17, 2024
- 2.41 - [2024 Integrated Investment Program Factsheet](#), April 17, 2024

CHAPTER 3 – UNITED KINGDOM OFFICIAL STATEMENTS AND DOCUMENTS

In the early days of AUKUS, the United Kingdom provided fewer official documents on the partnership, though those of particular importance are included below. One of the most significant developments for the UK’s foreign and defence policy in the past year was the release of its Integrated Review Refresh in March 2023, the successor of the 2021 Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Foreign Policy and Development.³⁵ The Refresh document was released in order to reflect on the significant changes to the geopolitical landscape that had followed the release of the 2021 Integrated Review – including sharpening tensions with China, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, a cost-of-living crisis, and energy pressures.

Like its American and Australian partners, the British government has increasingly focused on the issue of securing supply chains for critical minerals and strategic technologies in order to operationalise AUKUS. The United Kingdom is also working bilaterally with Australia on the area of critical minerals and, in April 2023, London and Canberra signed a joint UK-Australia pledge to secure future supplies of critical minerals and also inaugurate a new British Consulate-General in Perth.

In August 2023, the British parliament published two documents that serve to provide a holistic summary of the AUKUS agreement from the British perspective: the first is a Research Briefing on Pillar I: the SSN-AUKUS submarine program; the second is a Research Briefing on Pillar II: the Advanced Capabilities. Updated versions of both reports were released in March 2024. There have also been various debates in Parliament that focused on all aspects of the AUKUS agreement, with particular focus on Pillar I and how it will impact the United Kingdom, including the revitalisation of the military industrial base. In August 2023, the Foreign Affairs Select Committee – controlled by the governing Conservative party – released a report focused on the Integrated Review and the Indo-Pacific, which included a recommendation that Japan and South Japan join AUKUS. In addition, the report recommended that the United Kingdom strengthen its relationship with Australia.

Underscoring the momentum taking place within the AUKUS partnership, in October 2023 representatives from Australia and the United Kingdom joined Royal Navy personnel in Faslane, Scotland to develop skills for the maintenance of nuclear-powered submarines. This was the first joint AUKUS visit to support the development of the Australian submarine maintenance force.

In March 2024, the Ministry of Defence released a Defence Nuclear Enterprise Command Paper, which highlighted that the UK Government has begun designing the SSN-AUKUS and “awarded contracts worth £4 billion for the development of the new conventionally armed, nuclear-powered SSN-AUKUS submarine,” adding that the “UK based design will be built in Barrow-in-Furness in the 2030s and will also be built and operated by Australia as part of our AUKUS partnership.” In conjunction with the Command Paper, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak declared a “national endeavour” to “secure the future of the UK’s thriving defence nuclear industry”. The announcement, which also included investments in nuclear skills, is backed by at least £763 million investment through a partnership between the Government and industry.

³⁵ “Integrated Review Refresh 2023: Responding to a More Contested and Volatile World,” UK Government, March 2023, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1145586/11857435_NS_IR_Refresh_2023_Supply_AllPages_Revision_7_WEB_PDF.pdf.

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- 3.1 - [The AUKUS Agreement, Research Briefing – House of Commons Library](#), October 11, 2021
- 3.2 - [Impact on Anglo-Chinese Relations Following the AUKUS Pact, Research Briefing – House of Commons Library](#), October 15, 2021
- 3.3 - [Parliament Debate on AUKUS, Volume 719](#), September 6, 2022
- 3.4 - [Parliament Debate on AUKUS Submarines, Volume 727](#), January 30, 2023
- 3.5 - [UK Integrated Review Refresh 2023: Responding to a More Contested and Volatile World](#), March 2023
- 3.6 - [Media Release by Ministry of Defence - British-led Design Chosen for AUKUS Submarine Project](#), March 13, 2023
- 3.7 - [Parliament Debate on AUKUS Defence Partnership](#), Volume 729, March 14, 2023
- 3.8 - [Parliament Debate on AUKUS Defence Partnership](#), Volume 828, March 16, 2023
- 3.9 - [Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Department for Energy, Security and Net Zero Press Release: UK Charges Up Ties with Western Australia in New Critical Minerals Pledge](#), April 4, 2023
- 3.10 - [Parliament Debate on AUKUS Submarine Project, Volume 732](#), May 15, 2023
- 3.11 - [Media Release by Ministry of Defence and Defence Science and Technology Laboratory - World First as UK Hosts Inaugural AUKUS AI and Autonomy Trial](#), May 26, 2023
- 3.12 - [Department for Business & Trade, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, and Prime Minister’s Office: The Atlantic Declaration](#), June 21, 2023
- 3.13 - [Parliament Debate on Nuclear Submarines: AUKUS, Volume 831, Volume 831](#), July 3, 2023
- 3.14 - [Foreign Affairs Committee Report on Tilting Horizons: The Integrated Review and the Indo-Pacific](#), August 30, 2023
- 3.15 - [Media Release by Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office - AUKUS Partners’ Statement to the IAEA Board of Governors](#), September 15, 2023
- 3.16 - [Media Release by Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office - IAEA Board on Naval Nuclear Propulsion: AUKUS Partners Update](#), September 15, 2023
- 3.17 - [Media Release by Ministry of Defence - £4 Billion UK Contracts Progresses AUKUS Submarine Design](#), October 1, 2023
- 3.18 - [Media Release by Ministry of Defence - AUKUS Personnel Collaborate on UK Submarines for Future Security](#), October 6, 2023

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- 3.19 - [Defence Committee Report on UK Defence and the Indo-Pacific](#), October 17, 2023
- 3.20 - [Media Release by Ministry of Defence, Submarine Delivery Agency, and the Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP - Grant Shapps and Richard Marles Visit Key Nuclear Site](#), November 3, 2023
- 3.21 - [AUKUS Pillar 2: Advanced Capabilities Programmes, Research Briefing – House of Commons Library](#), November 9, 2023
- 3.22 - [Media Release by Ministry of Defence - New Undersea Capability to Strengthen AUKUS Partnership](#), November 13, 2023
- 3.23 - [AUKUS Submarine \(SSN-A\) Programme, Research Briefing – House of Commons Library](#), November 22, 2023
- 3.24 - [Media Release by Defence Science and Technology Laboratory - Dstl AI Success with AUKUS](#), December 15, 2023
- 3.25 - [AUKUS Trial Advances AI and Autonomy Collaboration](#), February 5, 2024
- 3.26 - [Parliament Debate on AUKUS Security Partnership](#), Volume 836, February 13, 2024
- 3.27 - [AUKUS Security Partnership, In Focus – House of Lords Library](#), February 19, 2024
- 3.28 - [AUKUS Submarine \(SSN-A\) Programme, Research Briefing – House of Commons Library](#), March 7, 2024
- 3.29 - [AUKUS Pillar 2: Advanced Capabilities, Research Briefing – House of Commons Library](#), March 8, 2024
- 3.30 - [UK Firm Appointed to Build Australian AUKUS Submarines](#), March 21, 2024
- 3.31 - [UK and Australia Celebrate Closer Ties with AUKUS Progress and New Defence Treaty](#), March 22, 2024
- 3.32 - [PM Announces National Endeavour to Strengthen the UK's Nuclear Deterrent](#), March 25, 2024
- 3.33 - [Defence Nuclear Enterprise Command Paper](#), March 26, 2024
- 3.34 - [Pulling Together: Australia, UK and US Seek Innovative Electromagnetic Technologies](#), March 26, 2024
- 3.35 - [AUKUS Partnership to Consult with Other Nations Including Japan on Military Capability Collaboration](#), March 26, 2024
- 3.36 - [Update on AUKUS Export Reform Progress](#), April 19, 2024

CHAPTER 4 – UNITED STATES OFFICIAL STATEMENTS AND DOCUMENTS

This section includes documents of US statements on AUKUS. Within these documents, American officials outline the American position on AUKUS in regard to trilateral cooperation, regional interaction, and its success. Many of these statements include dialogue from leaders of the AUKUS partners, reflecting the collaborative efforts of AUKUS partners to achieve goals like those laid out in the Optimal Pathway.

Statements from American officials track all aspects of AUKUS integration into existing American institutions of defence and foreign policy. This includes statements reflecting on the inception of AUKUS and its relevance to regional stability, in addition to those discussing how these goals will be realised – from budget allocation to increased American port visits to Australia.

The section also includes landmark strategic and budget documents that have direct implications on AUKUS, such as the National Security Strategy, National Defense Strategy, FY2024 National Defense Authorization Act (passed in December 2023), which included several key AUKUS-enabling provisions, and National Defense Industrial Strategy.³⁶

As a promising step forward for US implementation of the provisions approved in the FY2024 NDAA, in April 2024, the US Commerce Department’s Bureau of Industry and Security released an interim final rule that “significantly reduc[es] licensing requirements for Australia and the United Kingdom (UK) to foster defence trade and technological innovation,” which it anticipates “will reduce licensing burdens for trade with Australia and the UK by over 1,800 total licences valued at over \$7.5 billion per year.”³⁷

³⁶ “Passage of Priority AUKUS Submarine and Export Control Exemption Legislation by the United States Congress,” *Australian Ministry of Defence*, December 15, 2023, <https://www.minister.defence.gov.au/media-releases/2023-12-15/passage-priority-aukus-submarine-and-export-control-exemption-legislation-united-states-congress>.


³⁷ “Commerce Significantly Streamlines Export Controls For Australia And The United Kingdom Advances Goals Of The Aukus Enhanced Trilateral Security Partnership,” US Commerce Department, April 18, 2024, <https://www.bis.gov/press-release/commerce-significantly-streamlines-export-controls-australia-and-united-kingdom>

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- 4.1 - [Background Press Call on AUKUS](#), September 15, 2021
- 4.2 - [Message to Congress on AUKUS](#), December 1, 2021
- 4.3 - [Congressional Research Service Report - AUKUS Nuclear Cooperation](#), December 11, 2021
- 4.4 - [Readout by Department of State - Secretary Blinken's Trilateral Meeting with Australian Foreign Minister Payne and UK Foreign Secretary Truss on AUKUS](#), February 19, 2022
- 4.5 - [Congressional AUKUS Working Group Announcement](#), April 1, 2022
- 4.6 - [White House Fact Sheet - Implementation of the Australia – United Kingdom – United States Partnership \(AUKUS\)](#), April 5, 2022
- 4.7 - [Congressional AUKUS Working Group Statement](#), April 6, 2022
- 4.8 - [Congressional Research Service Report - AUKUS and Indo-Pacific Security](#), May 19, 2022
- 4.9 - [Australia-U.S. Submarine Officer Pipeline Act](#), June 13, 2022
- 4.10 - [Statement by Acting Pentagon Press Secretary - Statement on AUKUS Senior Adviser](#), July 29, 2022
- 4.11 - [US National Security Strategy](#), October 2022
- 4.12 - [US National Defense Strategy](#), October 2022
- 4.13 - [Media Release by Department of Defense - Austin Says Progress Made on Developing Australia's Nuclear-Powered Subs](#), December 7, 2022
- 4.14 - [Congressional Letter to President Biden on AUKUS](#), January 10, 2023
- 4.15 [Media Release by House Armed Services Committee - "Far from a Zero-Sum Game": Rogers Joins Courtney and Bipartisan Coalition to Reiterate Strong Support for AUKUS](#), January 11, 2023
- 4.16 - [Media Release by Department of Defense - Austin Notes Progress on Development of Australia's Nuclear-Powered Sub](#), February 3, 2023

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- 4.17 - [Department of State Fact Sheet - Marking One Year Since the Release of the Administration's Indo-Pacific Strategy](#), February 13, 2023
- 4.18 - [White House Fact Sheet - Trilateral Australia-UK-US Partnership on Nuclear-Powered Submarines](#), March 13, 2023
- 4.19 - [Statement by Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III - AUKUS Optimal Pathway](#), March 13, 2023
- 4.20 - [Statement by Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken - AUKUS Leaders' Announcement](#), March 13, 2023
- 4.21 - [Statement by Senate Foreign Relations Committee Ranking Member - Risch: AUKUS Pillar One a Good Start, More To Be Done](#), March 13, 2023
- 4.22 - [Special Briefing with State and Defense Department Officials on AUKUS](#), March 14, 2023
- 4.23 - [Press Briefing with State Department and National Security Council Officials on AUKUS](#), March 14, 2023
- 4.24 - [Media Release by Department of Defense - AUKUS Plan Looks to Shore up Deterrence, Promote Stability](#), March 14, 2023
- 4.25 - [Statement by House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman - McCaul Speaks on House Floor in Support of Deterring China Through AUKUS Bill](#), March 24, 2023
- 4.26 - [Statement by Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III - Australia's Defence Strategic Review](#), April 24, 2023
- 4.27 - [Statement by Senate Foreign Relations Committee Ranking Member - Risch, Hagerty Introduce TORPEDO Act](#), May 5, 2023
- 4.28 - [Senate Appropriations Full Committee Hearing - A Review of the President's Fiscal Year 24 Budget Request: Investing in U.S. Security, Competitiveness and the Path Ahead for the U.S. China Relationship](#), May 16, 2023
- 4.29 - [House Foreign Affairs Full Committee Hearing - Modernizing US Arms Exports and a Stronger AUKUS](#), May 24, 2023
- 4.30 - [Media Release by Department of Defense - AUKUS Partners Demonstrate Advanced Capabilities Trial](#), May 26, 2023

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- 4.31 - [Remarks by Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III at the Shangri-La Dialogue - A Shared Vision for the Indo-Pacific \(As Delivered\)](#), June 2, 2023
- 4.32 - [Congressional Research Service Report - AUKUS Pillar 2: Background and Issues for Congress](#), June 20, 2023
- 4.33 - [Media Release by Department of Defense - CNO: AUKUS Builds Upon Three Nations' Close Naval Ties](#), June 26, 2023
- 4.34 - [Department of State Fact Sheet - The AUKUS Trade Authorization Mechanism \(ATAM\): Ensuring Swift and Secure Defense Trade Under AUKUS](#), July 10, 2023
- 4.35 - [Statement by Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman on Approval of Amendment Strengthening AUKUS Partnership](#), July 13, 2023
- 4.36 - [Statement by Senate Foreign Relations Committee Ranking Member on AUKUS Legislation](#), July 13, 2023
- 4.37 - [Release by House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman - McCaul, Kean, Kim, Huizenga Introduce the Bilateral Resilience in Industry Trade Security \(BRITS\) Act to Strengthen US-UK Defense Cooperation](#), July 21, 2023
- 4.38 - [Statement by Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman on Passage of National Defense Legislation](#), July 27, 2023
- 4.39 - [Statement by Senate Foreign Relations Committee Ranking Member - AUKUS Succeeds If US Eases Defense Regulations for Allies](#), July 27, 2023
- 4.40 - [Senate Foreign Relations Full Committee Hearing - AUKUS: A Generational Opportunity to Deepen Our Security Partnerships with Australia and the United Kingdom](#), September 6, 2023
- 4.41 - [Media Release by Department of Defense - DOD Official Says AUKUS Partnership Strengthens Indo-Pacific Security](#), September 6, 2023
- 4.42 - [Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III Statement - Two-Year Anniversary of AUKUS](#), September 15, 2023
- 4.43 - [House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces Hearing - The Submarine Industrial Base and Its Ability to Support the AUKUS Framework](#), October 25, 2023

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- 4.44 - [Media Release by Department of Defence - Karlin Says U.S. Can Support AUKUS Submarine Builds](#), October 25, 2023
- 4.45 - [Statement by House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman - McCaul Celebrates Australian Prime Minister Albanese's Visit to Washington](#), October 26, 2023
- 4.46 - [Congressional Research Service Report - US Arms Transfer Restrictions and AUKUS Cooperation](#), November 15, 2023
- 4.47 - [Congressional Research Service Report - AUKUS Nuclear Cooperation](#), November 15, 2023
- 4.48 - [Remarks by Ambassador Bonnie Jenkins, Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security - AUKUS: A Commitment to the Future](#), November 27, 2023
- 4.49 - [Media Release by Department of Defense - DOD Plans Indo-Pacific Innovation Challenge](#), December 1, 2023
- 4.50 - [Media Release by US Space Force - US, UK, Australia Announce Trilateral Deep Space Advanced Radar Capability Initiative](#), December 2, 2023
- 4.51 - [FY2024 National Defense Authorization Act](#), December 13, 2023
- 4.52 - [Congressional Research Service Report - Navy Virginia-Class Submarine Program and AUKUS Submarine Proposal: Background and Issues for Congress](#), December 27, 2023
- 4.53 - [Congressional Research Service Report - US Arms Transfer Restrictions and AUKUS Cooperation](#), January 4, 2024
- 4.54 - [National Defense Industrial Strategy](#), January 24, 2024
- 4.55 - [Statement from NSC Spokesperson Adrienne Watson Marking the Two-Year Anniversary of the Indo-Pacific Strategy](#), February 11, 2024
- 4.56 - [Congressional Research Service Report - Navy Virginia-Class Submarine Program and AUKUS Submarine Proposal: Background and Issues for Congress](#), February 13, 2024
- 4.57 - [Congressional Testimony, Ambassador Bonnie Jenkins: "AUKUS Implementation and Challenges to International Security and Arms Control in the 21st Century."](#) February 14, 2024
- 4.58 - [Chairman McCaul Delivers Opening Remarks at Full Committee Hearing Examining Importance of AUKUS](#), February 14, 2024

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- 4.59 - [Rep. Courtney Marks First Day of School for Royal Australian Navy Sailors at Sub Base New London](#), February 20, 2024
- 4.60 - [DIU Partners With AUKUS Pillar II for International Prize Challenge](#), March 26, 2024
- 4.61 - [AUKUS Partners Consider Cooperation With Japan](#), April 8, 2024
- 4.62 - [AUKUS Countries Set Measured Pace for Security Partnership](#), April 9, 2024
- 4.63 - [AUKUS Partners Focus on Indo-Pacific Security in Shaping Joint Capabilities](#), April 10, 2024
- 4.64 - [Defense Industrial Strategy Already Making Headway in Maritime Space](#), April 11, 2024
- 4.65 - [Commerce Significantly Streamlines Export Controls For Australia And The United Kingdom Advances Goals Of The Aukus Enhanced Trilateral Security Partnership](#), April 18, 2024
- 4.66 - [Continued Progress on AUKUS Defense Trade Integration](#), April 19, 2024

CHAPTER 5 – INTERNATIONAL OFFICIAL STATEMENTS AND DOCUMENTS

The documents in this chapter include official statements from foreign governments, embassy, or national leaders, as well as intergovernmental organisations, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), addressing their own perspectives on AUKUS trilateral nuclear cooperation.

China published several sets of remarks specifically on AUKUS, expressing grave concern and asserting that AUKUS is illegal and hypocritical. **Russia** did not publish any official statement targeting AUKUS, but one interview of Vladimir Putin and his two addresses referred to AUKUS as an aggressive, block-creating effort by the West. **China and Russia** released a joint statement on their shared interests in a variety of issues, condemning AUKUS an effort to undermine security and sustainable development of the Asia-Pacific region.

Japan released two bilateral joint statements with Australia, two trilateral joint statements with the United States and Australia at the ministerial level, and four ambassador-level statements, reiterating its consistent support for AUKUS as security cooperation based on non-proliferation. Most recently, a joint statement between Japan and the United States in April 2024 recognised “Japan’s strengths and the close bilateral defence partnerships with the AUKUS countries,” noting that the AUKUS partners “are considering cooperation with Japan on AUKUS Pillar II advanced capability projects.”³⁸

The **Philippines** released a statement urging AUKUS to align with existing regional cooperations, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and follow the global non-proliferation standard set by the IAEA. **Vietnam** remarked that it hoped AUKUS will contribute to regional peace, stability, cooperation, and development. **Malaysia** fully supported AUKUS in its first statement and urged the AUKUS members and concerning parties to comply with the existing non-proliferation regime and norms in its second statement. Indonesia expressed deep concerns over the arms race and power projection in the region in an official statement.

Finally, the **IAEA** released several reports regarding AUKUS, and the Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi of the IAEA announced a counter statement on the joint announcement by the AUKUS members in March 2023, emphasising the importance of non-proliferation and each member’s respective safeguards agreements and additional protocols.

³⁸ “United States-Japan Joint Leaders’ Statement,” White House, April 10, 2024, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/04/10/united-states-japan-joint-leaders-statement/>

CHINA

5.1 - [Statement by H.E. Ambassador Wang Qun on the Trilateral Nuclear Submarine Cooperation under AUKUS](#), November 26, 2021

5.2 - [Chinese Embassy Spokesperson's Remarks on AUKUS Nuclear Submarine Cooperation](#), September 20, 2022

5.3 - [Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin's Remarks on the AUKUS Nuclear Submarine Cooperation](#), March 23, 2023

5.4 - [Embassy Spokesperson's Remarks on AUKUS Nuclear Submarine Cooperation \(1\)](#), April 9, 2023

5.5 - [Embassy Spokesperson's Remarks on AUKUS Nuclear Submarine Cooperation \(2\)](#), April 9, 2023

5.6 - [Embassy Spokesperson's Remarks on AUKUS Nuclear Submarine Cooperation \(3\)](#), April 9, 2023

5.7 - [Embassy Spokesperson's Remarks on AUKUS Nuclear Submarine Cooperation \(4\)](#), April 9, 2023

RUSSIA

5.8 - [President Putin Interview with CNBC at the Russian Energy Week Forum](#), October 14, 2021

5.9 - [President Putin Address at the 10th Moscow Conference on International Security](#), August 16, 2022

5.10 - [President Putin Address at the 11th Moscow Conference on International Security](#), August 15, 2023

CHINA AND RUSSIA

5.11 - [Joint Statement of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China on the International Relations Entering a New Era and the Global Sustainable Development](#), February 4, 2022

JAPAN

5.12 - [Statement by Ambassador Hikihara Takeshi at the IAEA Board of Governors Meeting on Item 5: Transfer of Nuclear Materials in the Context of AUKUS and Its Safeguards in All Aspects under the NPT](#), November 26, 2021

5.13 - [Australia-Japan Leaders' Meeting Joint Statement](#), January 6, 2022

5.14 - [Statement by Ambassador Hikihara Takeshi at the IAEA Board of Governors Meeting on Item 15: Any Other Business \(AUKUS\)](#), June 6, 2022

5.15 - [Statement by Ambassador Hikihara Takeshi at the IAEA Board of Governors Meeting on Item 8\(d\): Agency Safeguards in the Context of Nuclear Naval Propulsion under AUKUS](#), September 12, 2022

5.16 - [Australia-Japan Leaders' Meeting Joint Statement](#), October 22, 2022

5.17 - [Statement by Ambassador Hikihara Takeshi at the IAEA Board of Governors Meeting on Item 12: Any Other Business \(AUKUS\)](#), March 10, 2023

5.18 - [United States-Japan-Australia Trilateral Defense Ministers' Meeting \(TDMM\) 2023 Joint Statement](#), June 3, 2023

5.19 - [United States-Japan Joint Leaders' Statement](#), April 10, 2024

PHILIPPINES

5.20 - [Statement of the Department of Foreign Affairs on the Recent AUKUS Announcement](#), March 15, 2023

VIETNAM

5.21 - [Remarks by the Vice Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam Pham Thu Hang on the Trilateral Security Pact between the US, the UK and Australia \(AUKUS\)](#), March 17, 2023

MALAYSIA

5.22 - [Response to Announcement by Australia, United Kingdom and the United States on Enhanced Trilateral Security Partnership – AUKUS](#), September 19, 2021

5.23 - [Response to Enhanced Trilateral Security Partnership Between Australia, The United Kingdom and the United States of America \(AUKUS\)](#), March 14, 2023



INDONESIA

5.24 - [Statement on Australia's Nuclear-powered Submarines Program](#), September 17, 2021

INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA)

5.25 - [AUKUS Statements: IAEA Board of Governors](#), June 2022

5.26 - [IAEA Board Report: IAEA Safeguards in Relation to AUKUS](#), September 9, 2022

5.27 - [IAEA Director General Statement in Relation to AUKUS Announcement](#), March 14, 2023

5.28 - [IAEA Board Report: Naval Nuclear Propulsion: Australia](#), May 31, 2023

5.29 - [IAEA Director General Statement in Relation to AUKUS Announcement](#), March 23, 2024

5.30 - [IAEA Director General Statement in Relation to AUKUS Announcement](#), April 9, 2024

CHAPTER 6 – NOTABLE NEWS AND COMMENTARY

The below compilation, while not exhaustive, aims to provide a relatively comprehensive survey of news and commentary on AUKUS since its initial announcement in September 2021 through mid-December 2023. The collection is organised into seven topical categories, with entries in each category organised chronologically:

- Internal, Regional and International Reactions to AUKUS
- Strategic Implications of AUKUS
- AUKUS Pillar 1 Progress, Challenges and Perspectives
- AUKUS Pillar 2 Progress, Challenges and Perspectives
- Export Controls
- Workforce Demands and Development
- Nuclear Nonproliferation

In cases where articles touched on multiple topics, we selected what we assessed to be the most relevant category. We have aimed to include a range of perspectives and sources, including a variety of publications both from and beyond the three AUKUS nations.

INTERNAL, REGIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL REACTIONS TO AUKUS

[AUKUS: China Denounces US-UK-Australia Pact as Irresponsible](#)

Date: September 16, 2021

Publication: BBC

[Is the AUKUS Alliance Meaningful or Merely Provocation?](#)

Date: September 16, 2021

Author(s): Beyza Unal, Kerry Brown, Patricia Lewis, and Yu Jie

Publication: Chatham House

[AUKUS – Winners and Losers of the Trilateral Defense Technical Agreement](#)

Date: September 17, 2021

Author(s): Diana Villiers Negroponte

Publication: Wilson Center

[‘Like a Scene From Le Carré’: How the Nuclear Submarine Pact Was No 10’s Biggest Secret](#)

Date: September 18, 2021

Author(s): Larisa Brown

Publication: The Times

[AUKUS is a Big Deal, but Needs to be Put in Perspective](#)


Date: September 20, 2021

Author(s): Bates Gill

Publication: Royal United Services Institute (RUSI)

[Australia Seeks to Calm ASEAN Nerves Over AUKUS, Nuclear Weapons](#)

Date: September 21, 2021



Author(s): Kentaro Iwamoto
Publication: Nikkei Asian Review

[Experts React: The AUKUS Deal Has Shaken the Transatlantic Alliance. What Should the US and Its Allies Do Now?](#)

Date: September 21, 2021
Publication: Atlantic Council

[Europe's Response to the U.S.-UK-Australia Submarine Deal: What to Know](#)

Date: September 22, 2021
Author(s): Charles A. Kupchan
Publication: Council on Foreign Relations

[Australia Must Take Southeast Asian Reactions to AUKUS Seriously](#)

Date: September 22, 2021
Author(s): Susannah Patton
Publication: United States Studies Centre

[China Has Only Itself to Blame for AUKUS](#)

Date: September 24, 2021
Author(s): Charles Edel
Publication: Foreign Policy

[AUKUS: France's Strategic Outcry](#)

Date: September 24, 2021
Author(s): Eglantine Staunton
Publication: Lowy Institute – The Interpreter

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CHAPTER 7 – GLOSSARY

AEA – Atomic Energy Act of 1954

ANZUS – Australia-New Zealand-United States Security Treaty

ASEAN – Association of Southeast Asian Nations

ATNIA – Australian Treaty National Interest Analysis

AUKMIN – Australia-UK Ministerial Consultations

AUKUS – The enhanced trilateral security partnership between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States

AURAS – AUKUS Undersea Robotics Autonomous Systems

AUSMIN – Australia-US Ministerial Consultations

AQUA – AUKUS Quantum Arrangement

ENNPIA – Exchange of Naval Nuclear Propulsion Information Agreement

FMS - Foreign Military Sales

IAEA – International Atomic Energy Agency

ITAR – International Traffic in Arms Regulations

JASSM-ER – Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missiles (Extended Range)

LRASM – Long-Range Anti-Ship Missiles (Extended Range)

NPT – Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

NTIB – National Technology and Industrial Base

SSN – Nuclear-powered attack submarines