

# Policy Document



## Defence & National Security

### Overview

Australia's security landscape has undergone rapid and profound change over the past two decades. The intensifying geopolitical rivalry between the United States and China poses a significant challenge to our national interests. While the United States remains a historical military ally, China is Australia's largest trading partner and home to a substantial Australian diaspora. Our existing military and strategic alignment with the United States risks entangling us in conflicts that are contrary to Australia's security and economic wellbeing.

Australia must take a decisive step towards independent defence and a non-aligned foreign policy. We must shift from relying on external security guarantees to building a robust, self-reliant national defence strategy that prioritises our immediate regional security interests. This shift is not only a military necessity but also a cultural and political transformation requiring bold leadership and national consensus.

### Policy Agenda

#### 1. A Self-Reliant Defence Strategy

- Transition Australia's military posture towards independent defence and regional stability.
- Reduce reliance on American military strategies and alliances that risk drawing Australia into conflicts not aligned with our national interests.

#### 2. A Cultural and Institutional Overhaul

- Reform the Department of Defence and the Australian Defence Force (ADF) to foster a culture of strategic autonomy.
- Improve integration between civilian and military infrastructure to enhance rapid response capabilities.
- Encourage broader public engagement and debate on national security issues to build a more informed and resilient society.

#### 3. Strategic Defence Priorities

- Maritime Defence Focus: Implement a sea denial strategy to intercept and deter potential threats in our northern maritime zone.

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- Territorial Security: Develop responsive forces capable of defending Australian soil and supporting regional stability.
- No Global Expeditions: Cease participation in distant military interventions that do not serve direct Australian security interests.

#### **4. Defence Capability Transformation**

- Naval Strategy: Shift to a fleet of 24–32 cost-effective submarines suited for sea denial, reducing reliance on large warships and amphibious assault forces.
- Army Reformation: Reorient the ADF from heavy combat expeditionary forces to a more agile force capable of rapid deployment in regional and domestic defence scenarios.
- Air Power Enhancement: Double the strike jet fleet to 200 aircraft, expand base infrastructure, and increase investment in long-range precision strike and air defence systems.
- Intelligence & Surveillance: Strengthen intelligence gathering capabilities through cutting-edge surveillance and reconnaissance technology.

#### **5. Budget and Funding**

- Increase defence spending from 2% to 3.5% of GDP to fund necessary upgrades and strategic shifts.
- Phase in spending increases efficiently to ensure a balanced fiscal impact while responding to urgent security needs.

#### **6. Ending Costly and Misaligned Defence Projects**

- Withdraw from the AUKUS submarine deal, redirecting funds towards more immediate and cost-effective defence assets.
- Cancel or sell off outdated and strategically misaligned acquisitions such as the SEA 5000 Hunter Class frigates and Canberra Class vessels.
- Cut inefficiencies in defence bureaucracy, including reductions in unnecessary personnel at Defence HQ and a review of the Defence Science and Technology Organisation's expenditure.

#### **7. Pragmatic Foreign Policy and Alliances**

- US Relationship: Maintain a strong but independent partnership with the United States, disengaging from outdated treaties like AUKUS and ANZUS where they conflict with national interests.
- China Engagement: Continue economic and cultural engagement with China while implementing safeguards against undue foreign influence in strategic sectors.
- New Zealand & Pacific Partnerships: Strengthen defence ties with New Zealand and Pacific Island nations, supporting regional stability and preventing external military influence.

#### **8. No Compulsory Military Service**

- Prioritise investments in technology, surveillance, and precision munitions over mandatory conscription.

## **9. Defence Procurement Reform**

- Prioritise cost-effective, off-the-shelf acquisitions rather than complex and domestically manufactured defence projects that inflate costs without proportional strategic benefits.
- Halt unrealistic ambitions for a domestic defence export industry, focusing instead on securing Australia's own defence needs efficiently.

## **Conclusion**

Australia stands at a critical juncture. We must break free from outdated security dependencies and take control of our own defence destiny. This independent policy approach ensures that Australia's security interests are placed above external influences, reinforcing our sovereignty and safeguarding our future.

**YOUR Vote, YOUR Voice...**

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