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Submission: The Defence Industry policy developed over the past ten years in particular has allowed specific industries to develop and grow in the right direction. Ideally all forms of Defence equipment should be manufactured in our own country. As this is not likely to be feasible this century, the next best solution is to encourage joint ventures with foreign enterprises clearly identified as owning or developing any particular technology we need. The role of BAe Systems, Lockheed Martin, Northrop, Electric Boat, Boeing, Raytheon and others seem to fit in this category. Among decision makers there is a tendency to view technologies developed in Australia as being somehow suspect and inferior to anything made in a foreign country. While this attitude gradually fades it has been replaced by a perception that Defence contractors are out to make huge profits at the taxpayers' expense. This results in wasteful competition among Australian companies who should be collaborating to ensure that they can win contracts in competition with foreign firms. The AWD bid is a case in point. Millions of dollars were wasted on 3 bids and in the end, the decision seemed to have been made on the basis of cost and not on capability. The next phase in this development must be to allow Australian companies the flexibility to design and build to meet the needs and expectations of the ADF. Using the F35 as an example, why should we buy an aircraft with one engine when the F111 with the safety margin of two engines, has a longer range and greater payload? Would it not have been better policy 20 years ago to select local companies with the various capabilities and contract them to collaborate together to produce an F111 replacement? The DHC4A "Battlefield Air Lifter" is overdue for replacement but will likely fly for another 5 years while the C27 is adopted by US Forces and others. With our extensive knowledge of the DHC4 and the capabilities in our aviation businesses, why not contract out the design and build of a replacement aircraft? I am encouraged by the success of the Thales/Timoney "Bushmaster" armoured vehicle and its attention to IED survivability. Sales to UK and Dutch forces indicate the quality of the product and its price competitiveness. Its a step in the right direction for Defence Industry.

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