

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

LIMITED DISTRIBUTION

## Terms of Reference

### Nuclear Submarine Feasibility Study Task Force (NSFS-TF)

s33a  
s47e

#### Purpose

1. These Terms of Reference (ToR), establish a Task Force to formally investigate the feasibility of Australia acquiring nuclear submarines; The Nuclear Submarine Feasibility Study Task Force (NSFS-TF). The ToR are summarised at Annex A.

#### Key Principles

2. The TF will operate under the following principles:

- a. s47E(d) s47e
- b. A non-advocate basis, collecting and assessing information that both supports and contests the capability options presented;
- c. A strictly need-to-know basis s33(a)(i), s47E(d) s33a, s47e
- d. Incorporating whole of government considerations, including strategic, industrial and international relations assessments and implications;
- e. s47E(d)  
s47E(d) s47e
- f. s33(a)(i), s47E(d)  
s33(a)(i), s47E(d) s33a, s47e

#### Deliverables and Tasks

3. The feasibility study will answer the following high level questions in order:

a. Phase 1A: How can Australia obtain access to the relevant technology?

- i. Who could it be obtained from, how, and when?
- ii. Options for what would be acquired and how it would be implemented.
- iii. s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

b. Phase 1B: s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

- i. s33(a)(i), s47E(d)
- ii.
- iii. s33a, s47e

c. Phase 1C: How can Australia acquire, operate and sustain nuclear submarines?

- i. s33(a)(i), s47B s33a, s47b
- ii. Industrial base required to support (including identification of opportunities).
- iii. Assessment of Strategic Policy issues s33(a)(i), s47E(d)  
s33(a)(i), s47E(d) s47e, s33a

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33a, s47e

LIMITED DISTRIBUTION



s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33a, s47e



LIMITED DISTRIBUTION

d. Phase ID: s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

i. s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

ii.

iii. s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33a, s47e

iv. Develop a decision pathway and when a decision is required to meet above.

Governance (Approval Process and Oversight)

4. The TF will be sponsored by the Secretary and CDF, supported by reporting from the Capability Manager (Chief of Navy). s47E(d)

s47E(d)

s47E(d)

s47e

5. s33(a)(i), s47F

appointed by the Chief of Navy

s33(a)(i), s47F

s33(a)(i), s47F

s33a, s47F

Schedule

6. s47E(d)

s47e

Phase 1 – Feasibility Study. Pending subsequent decisions, future phases may conduct detailed International Engagement, Capability Assessments, Transition Planning, complete Fundamental Inputs to Capability (FIC) Analysis, communications planning, as well as Whole of Government elements, such as planning s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33a, s47e

Costs

7. All costs for Phase 1—Feasibility Study, will be met from within the existing Defence (Navy) budget.

MJ Noonan, AO  
Vice Admiral, RAN  
Chief of Navy

25 May 20

Annexes:

a. Task Force Terms of Reference Summary.

b. s33(a)(i), s47F

c. s33(a)(i), s47F

s33a, s47f

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33a, s47e

LIMITED DISTRIBUTION



s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33a, s47e

FOI 146/21/22  
Doc 1

LIMITED DISTRIBUTION

ANNEX A: TASK FORCE TERMS OF REFERENCE SUMMARY

**Purpose**

- Bring together functional expertise from across government to understand the feasibility of Australia acquiring, operating and sustaining nuclear submarines in the short to medium term.

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33a, s47e

**Inputs**

In completing the feasibility study and answering the required questions, the TF will engage with:

- Legislative and Strategic Policy expertise;
- Contracting and Finance expertise;
- s33(a)(i), s47E(d) Submarine technology expertise s33(a)(i), s47E(d) s33a, s47e
- Defence expertise that covers various FIC components.

**Output**

A feasibility study that answers the following questions:

- Question 1: Can Australia obtain access to the relevant technology?
- Question 2: s33(a)(i), s47E(d) s33a, s47e
- Question 3: Can Australia acquire, operate and sustain Nuclear Submarines?
- Question 4: s33(a)(i), s47E(d) s33a, s47e

**Sponsor**

Chief of Navy Australia, VADM Michael Noonan, AO, RAN

**Head of Task Force**

Commodore Timothy Brown, RAN

**Location**

To be confirmed – an appropriate SCIF.

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33a, s47e

**Timing**

- Task Force ToR to be agreed and signed by 29 May 20;
- s47E(d)
- s47E(d) s47e
- Feasibility Study to be completed by 31 Dec 20.

s33(a)(i), s47F

s47e, s47f

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33a, s47e

LIMITED DISTRIBUTION



s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33a, s47e

LIMITED DISTRIBUTION

## ANNEX B: TASK FORCE INITIAL ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Chief of Navy

VADM M Noonan

Head Task  
Force (HTF)

CDRE T Brown

s47F

s47f

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33a, s47e

LIMITED DISTRIBUTION

0710  
003



s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33a, s47e

LIMITED DISTRIBUTION

# TASK FORCE PROGRESSIVE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OPTION

2000  
TBD

s33(a)(i), s47F

s33a, s47f

s33(a)(i), s47F

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33a, s47e

LIMITED DISTRIBUTION

2000  
0704

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33a, s47e

LIMITED DISTRIBUTION

Nuclear Submarine Feasibility Study Task Force - Indicative Schedule									
2020								2021	
MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

Can we obtain access to the technology?

Who could it be obtained from and when?  
Broad Options for implementation

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

How Can Australia operate and sustain nuclear capability

State and Federal Legal and Policy implications

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

Assessment of s33(a)(i), s47E(d) policy implications

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

s33a, s47e

s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

Decision pathway and when key decisions are required

~~SECRET AUSTEO~~



Australian Government  
Department of Defence

## Terms of Reference for Defence Capability Enhancement Review

### Appointment:

1. The 2016 Defence White Paper (2016 DWP) foreshadowed a 'strategic review' of Australia's submarine capability to take place in the late 2020's. The Minister for Defence has directed that this review shall occur now.

2. We appoint you, VADM J Mead AO RAN, to conduct this Capability Enhancement Review. s33(a)(i)  
s33(a)(i)

### Background:

3. As noted in the 2020 Defence Strategic Update, Australia's strategic circumstances have deteriorated since the finalisation of the 2016 DWP. Anti-access and area-denial capabilities are constraining traditional military options, and the rapid introduction of more advanced submarines, sensors and weapons will further complicate the subsurface threat environment over the coming decades. Furthermore, the effects of Covid-19 on global supply chains have underscored the need for a robust sovereign industry base to bolster ADF capability and to ensure supply chain resilience.

4. Submarines are fundamental to the nation's maritime security. They secure Australia's strategic advantage and underpin Australia's credibility and influence as a modern military power. s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

### Your Report:

5. You are to report to us on:

- a. Relevant changes in the maritime threat environment that are expected to impact the nation's defence strategies, particularly with respect to the undersea environment, since the 2016 DWP;
- b. Relevant developments in submarine technology that may enhance Australia's submarine capabilities in terms of shaping, deterring and responding across the region (including weapons and launch systems);

~~SECRET AUSTEO~~



~~SECRET AUSTEO~~

- c. s33(a)(i) [REDACTED]
- The assessment should compare s33(a)(i) alternatives with respect to military strategy, technology, interoperability and industry, while understanding the implications on capability and supporting financial impacts to sustainably manage a program through whole-of-life.
- d. s33(a)(i) [REDACTED]
- e. An assessment of the affordability of potential future submarine programs against the backdrop of the nation's military strategy, and the impact of the submarine program on the integrated Investment Plan. Affordability should take into account the financial, workforce, infrastructure, acquisition, and sustainment costs to the nation.

6. Your review should consider these matters against the backdrop of the rapid change in Australia's strategic environment, which reflects three critical threshold moments in the Future Submarine Program, namely:

- a. Defence White Paper 2009, which announced increasing the force from six to 12 submarines;
- b. Defence White Paper 2016, which announced 12 regionally superior conventional submarines were to be constructed in Australia under a rolling build program; and the
- c. Defence Strategic Update 2020, which announced that the strategic underpinnings of the Defence White Paper 2016 had been reassessed in light of military modernisation in the Indo-Pacific, which has accelerated faster than envisaged. Additionally, confidence in the rules-based order was being undermined from a widening range of sources, and major power competition was intensifying. s33(a)(i), s47E(d)

7. s33(a)(i) [REDACTED]

~~SECRET AUSTEO~~



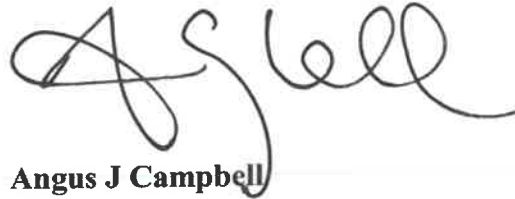
~~SECRET AUSTEO~~

8. You are to inform yourself as is appropriate to your task and terms of reference. Your review is afforded the highest priority and you are to advise us as to the resources you require. Funding and resources to support your review are to be sourced through the Office of the Secretary of Defence. Requested personnel will be assigned by the Secretary and Chief of Defence Force.

Signed:



**Greg Moriarty**  
Secretary



**Angus J Campbell**  
General  
Chief of Defence Force

11 Feb 2021

11 Feb 2021

~~SECRET AUSTEO~~