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Nuclear Posture Review – Talking Points

Handling Note: ‘if raised’ talking points for any inquiries post-public release of the 2022 US Nuclear Posture Review in early-April. These points will be continually updated, as events unfold, through the department’s Question Time brief on the US NPR and extended deterrence.

- Australia welcomes the release of the Biden administration’s Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) on XXX April.
- The US Nuclear Posture Review is an important periodic process which updates and clarifies the United States’ nuclear declaratory policy against the current and emerging international security environment.

- s33(a)(iii)

- s33(a)(iii)

If raised: Australia’s consultation and advocacy on the Nuclear Posture Review?

- s33(a)(i)

- s33(a)(iii)

- s33(a)(iii)

- United States nuclear declaratory policy is ultimately a matter for the US Government.

If raised: Is Australia (and other US allies) concerned by potential changes in declaratory policy as part of its Nuclear Posture Review? Couldn’t this weaken extended nuclear deterrence?

- Australia is well assured by the United States’ commitment to effective extended deterrence, based on its nuclear and conventional capabilities.

If raised: How has Russia’s aggression towards the Ukraine influenced the US position on extended deterrence in the NPR?

- It is not for Australia to comment on internal US considerations regarding any factors that may have influenced the NPR process.
- s33(a)(iii)

If raised: Should Australia consider developing its own nuclear weapons?

- Australia stands by its obligations as a non-nuclear-weapons states under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons not to acquire nuclear weapons

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- this is not on our agenda nor is it in our interests.
- We are confident in the extended deterrence provided by the United States through both its nuclear and conventional capabilities.

If raised: How can Australia claim it supports disarmament while accepting, and possibly encouraging, the potential use of nuclear weapons by the United States to deter threats to Australia?

- Our pragmatic acceptance of extended deterrence does not diminish Australia's broader commitment to pursuing nuclear disarmament and reducing the risks of nuclear war
 - but we must be realistic about the global security environment.
- So long as the threat of nuclear attack and coercion exists, the United States' extended deterrence will serve Australia's fundamental national security interests
 - as outlined in the Government's 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper and 2020 Defence Strategic Update.
- Under successive governments, Australia has actively supported nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and worked towards the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons
 - and we will continue our leadership and pragmatic approach to pursuing this goal.

If raised: s22 non-proliferation concerns

- Australia's commitment to nuclear non-proliferation is unchanged – we stand by our record.
- Australia does not, and will not, seek to acquire nuclear weapons.
 - The Prime Minister has unequivocally affirmed that this is neither on our agenda, nor in our interests.
 - : Suggestions to the contrary are disinformation.
- Australia remains a non-nuclear weapon state committed to its obligation under the Non-Proliferation Treaty not to acquire nuclear weapons.
- s22

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From: s47E(d) on behalf of [Strategic Issues Management](#)
Subject: Daily Defence talking points - Thursday 31 Mar 2022 [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Thursday, 31 March 2022 12:45:19 PM

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Good afternoon,

Please see below today's talking points.

| Talking points | |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Lead Group or Service | Subject |
| s22 | |

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Strategy, Policy, and
Industry (SP&I)

[US Nuclear Posture Review and Extended Deterrence](#)

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Lead Division

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| Contact: s47E(d) | Phone: s22 |
| Division: IP Division | Action Officer: s47E(d) |
| Date first prepared: 28 January 2022 | Date last Updated: 31/03/2022 07:20 AM |
| Originating Source: MO | |

US Nuclear Posture Review and Extended Deterrence

Key Talking Points

- We look forward to the formal public release of the 2022 US Nuclear Posture Review.
- Australia is well assured by the United States' commitments to effective extended deterrence, based on its nuclear and conventional capabilities.
- The US Nuclear Posture Review is an important periodic process which updates and clarifies the United States' nuclear declaratory policy against the current and emerging international security environment.
- We look forward to the formal public release of the 2022 US Nuclear Posture Review.
- Welcome recent United States' statements on the NPR that "maintaining a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent, and strong and credible extended deterrence commitments" remains a top priority.
 - Australia is well assured by the United States' commitments to effective extended deterrence, based on its nuclear and conventional capabilities.
- Welcome also the United States' stated commitment to "reducing the role of nuclear weapons and re-establishing its leadership in arms control".

If asked: Australia's consultation and advocacy on the Nuclear Posture Review?

- s33(a)(i) and (iii) [REDACTED]
- s33(a)(iii) [REDACTED]
- United States nuclear declaratory policy is ultimately a matter for the US Government.

If raised: Is Australia concerned by the US' proposed changes to nuclear declaratory policy as part of the Nuclear Posture Review? Couldn't this weaken extended nuclear deterrence?

- Australia is well assured by the United States' commitment to effective extended deterrence, based on its nuclear and conventional capabilities.

If raised: How has Russia's aggression towards the Ukraine influenced the US position on extended deterrence in the NPR?

- s33(a)(iii) [REDACTED]
- s33(a)(iii) [REDACTED]

If raised: s22 [REDACTED] and non-proliferation concerns?

- Australia's commitment to nuclear non-proliferation is unchanged - Australia does not, and will not, seek to acquire nuclear weapons
 - The Prime Minister has unequivocally affirmed that this is neither on our agenda, nor in our interests.
 - Suggestions to the contrary are disinformation.
 - s22 [REDACTED]

Background and Chronology

s22 [REDACTED]

s22

Lead Division

| | |
|---|---|
| Contact: Peter Sawczak, First Assistant Secretary | Phone: s47E(d) / s22 |
| Division: Strategic Policy Division | Action Officer: s47E(d) |
| Date first prepared: 25 March 2022 | Date last Updated: 31/03/2022 - 9:23 AM |

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From: s47E(d)
Subject: Daily Defence Talking Points - Tuesday 18 May 2021 [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Tuesday, 18 May 2021 10:10:12 AM

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Good morning,

Please see below today's talking points.

| Talking Points | |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Lead Group or Service | Subject |

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Strategy, Policy, and
Industry Group
(SP&I)

[Non-Proliferation](#)

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s47E(d)

Ministerial Liaison Officer

Parliamentary and Ministerial Management | [Ministerial Executive Coordination and
Communication Division](#)

Department of Defence

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| s22

| CANBERRA BC ACT 2610

P: s22

| E: s47E(d)

[@defence.gov.au](#)

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Lead Division

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| Contact: Peter Sawczak, First Assistant Secretary | Phone: s22 |
| Division: Defence Industry Policy | Action Officer: s47E(d) |
| Date first prepared: 22 April 2021 | Date last Updated: 18/05/2021 - 8:08 AM |
| Originating Source: MO | |

Non-Proliferation

Key Talking Points

- Australia is a strong supporter of the *Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty*, and will not acquire nuclear weapons, s33(a)(iii)
- s22
- Australia's immediate nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation priorities are addressed through the *Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty*, the *Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty* and engagement with the International Atomic Energy Agency.
- s33(a)(ii)
- Australia is a founding member of the Proliferation Security Initiative, which

aims to combat illicit shipments related to Weapons of Mass Destruction capability.

If asked: Nuclear Deterrence

- s33(a)(ii) and (iii)

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Background and Chronology

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Lead Division

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|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Contact: Celia Perkins | Phone: s47E(d) / s22 |
| Division: Strategic Policy | Action Officer: Sally Bulkeley |

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| Date first prepared: 20 April 2021 | Date last Updated: 18/05/2021 - 9:18 AM |
| Originating Source: Dept | |

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Good afternoon,

Today's talking points topics are listed below.

Daily Defence Talking Points Pack
as at Friday, 27 November 2020

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NUCLEAR DETERRENCE s22

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NUCLEAR DETERRENCE s22

Key Points

- s33(a)(i) and (iii)
- s33(a)(i) and (iii)
- s22

s22



Talking Points

Handling note: s22

- s33(a)(ii) and (iii)
- s33(a)(iii)
- Australia cannot and does not expect others to bear the burden of ensuring that the world is a safe and secure place without making our own contributions.
- The Government is firmly committed to Australia taking greater responsibility for our own security.
- Growing the ADF's self-reliant ability to deliver deterrent effects is an integral part of this commitment.
- A key priority for our Alliance is working together on our deterrence and deterrent capabilities, and ensuring they adapt to new challenges.

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If raised: Hosting intermediate range missiles in the Pacific region

- s33(a)(iii)
- s33(a)(iii)
- s33(a)(iii)

If raised: s22 and s33a(iii)

- s22 and s33a(iii)
- s22 and s33a(iii)
- s22 and s33a(iii)

If asked: s22 and s33a(iii)

- s22 and s33a(iii)
- s22 and s33a(iii)
- s22 and s33a(iii)
- Australia is a signatory to both the South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone Treaty and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.
- s22 and s33a(iii)

If raised: Deterrence role of Joint Facilities

- Australia actively supports US extended nuclear deterrence through the Joint Facilities, such as Joint Defence Facility Pine Gap and the Joint Geological and Geophysical Research Station and through Australia's Naval Communication Station Harold E. Holt.
- This was noted by Defence Minister Pyne in his 20 February 2019 Ministerial Statement on Joint Facilities to the Australian Parliament.
- The Joint Defence Facility Pine Gap contributes to effective deterrence through accurate warning of ballistic missile launches, and supports compliance with international arms control and disarmament agreements.
- The Joint Geological and Geophysical Research Station performs a crucial role as part of the International Monitoring System of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty s33(a)(ii)
- The Naval Communication Station Harold E Holt, which was established in the 1960s, contributes to extended nuclear deterrence s33(a)(iii)
- s33(a)(i) and (ii)
- Through the long-standing policy of Full Knowledge and Concurrence, Australia maintains a full and detailed understanding of the capabilities and activities occurring on, though, or from Australian territory; and approves the presence of a capability or function in support of mutually-agreed goals, including nuclear deterrence.

If raised: Why isn't Australia a signatory to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons?

- We are aware the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons will enter into force from January 2021.
- Australia does not support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons ('Ban Treaty') as it risks undermining the NPT, the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation system.
- No nuclear weapon states were part of the Ban Treaty negotiations, and the treaty will not rid the world of a single nuclear weapon.

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Background

NIL

Contact and Clearance Officer

| Contact Officer | Clearance Officer |
|---|---|
| Zoe Cameron Assistant Secretary Strategic Policy s22 s47E(d) @defence.gov.au | Celia Perkins First Assistant Secretary Strategic Policy s22 s22 s47E @defence.gov.au - Date 27 November 2020 |

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