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## Talking points

### East Coast Base

- I am pleased with my staff's ongoing engagement with their NSW counterparts to assess the feasibility of Port Kembla and the Port of Newcastle as potential east coast base locations.
- It is a lengthy process to establish a new base, requiring significant technical investigations, coupled with stakeholder and community engagement before any works can commence.
- While I note the recent comments that a Government decision is unlikely to occur until after the next Federal election, I believe detailed assessments and engagement should continue until we receive further guidance following release of the Government's Defence Strategic Review.
- I am keen for your insights on whether there has been any change to the NSW Government's position on an east coast base following the recent election.
- I am interested to understand if there has been communication between yourself and the Port operators, following announcement of the Nuclear Powered Submarine Optimal Pathway and NSW Ports comments relating to construction and maintenance of an offshore wind farm facility at Port Kembla.

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- The future commercial plans for Port Kembla have been the subject of a recent media campaign from NSW Ports which is not supportive of it as a future site for an East Coast Naval Base.
- Economic and commercial development within these ports has the potential to close out future Defence opportunities. As a part owner of Port Kembla and the Port of Brisbane, I would appreciate your thoughts on the commercial and economic drivers and the compatibility of proposed industries with Defence needs.

Contact officer: s47E(d)

Contact officer phone: s22

## East Coast Nuclear-Powered Submarine Facility

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### Talking Points

- The Government has agreed in-principle that an east coast facility should be established for Australia's future submarine capability.
  - The Government will develop a process to consider all feasible options for an east coast facility to support Australia's future submarine capability. A decision on the location for this facility will be made late in this decade.
- A new east coast facility will enhance Australia's capacity to support the current, future, and partner nation nuclear-powered submarines, and other undersea warfare capabilities.
- A new facility would also provide redundancy and dispersal and increase speed of transit to key east coast operational areas.
- On 7 March 2022, the former Prime Minister announced that Port Kembla and the ports of Newcastle and Brisbane would be assessed for feasibility as potential sites for an east coast base.
- Defence is working with the New South Wales and Queensland Governments on the detailed feasibility assessment for each of the three identified locations.
  - These assessments will consider the social, economic environmental impacts, and any planned commercial activities at each location.



**Australian Government**

**Defence**

## MINISTERIAL TALKING POINTS

### East Coast Submarine Facility

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### Talking Points

- The Defence Strategic Review recommended that an east coast submarine facility should be established. The Government agrees in-principle to the Review's recommendation, though will not make a decision on the location until later in this decade.
- A future East Coast Submarine facility would host the nation's submarine fleet in conjunction with HMAS *Stirling*.

- The three preferred sites east coast sites identified by the previous Government were Port Kembla, the Port of Newcastle and the Port of Brisbane.
- They were selected based on criteria which includes reasonable proximity to Defence exercise operating areas, closeness to industrial infrastructure and to significant population centres, to support personnel and recruitment.
- While I understand the strong community interest in the location of an east coast submarine facility, the reality is that more comprehensive and detailed feasibility assessments are required and likely to be undertaken over a number of years.
- This will include detailed studies considering the social, economic, and environmental impacts at each location. We're committed to doing these properly, and that will take time to complete.
- Current and planned commercial activities within each port will also have to be taken into consideration when assessing their compatibility with Defence needs.

Contact officer: Mr Pat Sowry

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Clearance	Name	Appointment	Date and time
Cleared by: (SEG)	Pat Sowry	Assistant Secretary Estate Planning	1541hrs 27 Apr 23
MECC Embedded Communication Director			
Has a copy been provided to Defence Media for Information?			