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## Defence Teaming Centre

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#### COVER CAPTION

An autonomous robotic undersea warfare vehicle is being designed and manufactured in Australia for the Royal Australian Navy. Ghost Shark - was revealed on December 12 at Anduril Australia, which is collaborating with Navy and Defence Science and Technology Group on the project.

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Since late February, a steady stream of Federal Defence reviews and strategies has been released. We've studied them in great detail and waited with great interest on clarity for businesses, especially resulting in ACTUAL tenders leading to contracts, yet sadly we're not seeing much on this front. There is a lot of talk about contracts, we know from the IIP and with the 2024-25 Budget there will be further realignment of current projects (i.e. cuts or downgrades). We're hearing a lot about money flowing into the system, especially in future years, however we're just not seeing it today!

I recently met with the Minister for Defence Industry, the Honourable Pat Conroy MP, in Canberra and sought answers regarding the specific details in the IIP of nearly 300 defence contracts earmarked for reassessment or cancellation. While the Federal Budget offered some semblance of insight, Minister Conroy has assured me the specifics will be released in June/July, when Working Group meetings convene to deliberate on the matter.

To this end, I urge members to register for the upcoming Land Environment Working Group (LEWG) on the 10 July in Canberra. Our collective input is invaluable in shaping the discourse and informing governmental decisions that reverberate across our sector. We are specifically interested in the extent of project cancellations and downgrades and the impact they will have on members and across defence industry. Data such as this is critical to go back to government so they can see the impact on our sector. If you missed the invitation we sent out to you earlier this month please let us know by email at business@dtc.org.au and we will forward you the invitation.

As many of you are aware Minister Conroy is also the Ambassador for the DTC's Defence Industry Leadership Program, or DILP as it is fondly known. As part of DILP

## Our collective input is invaluable in shaping the discourse and informing governmental decisions that reverberate across our sector.

participants are divided into groups and tasked with researching a particular topic that has been assigned to them, and at the end of the course they submit their research paper – which is than shared with key Difference decision makers, including CASG, Department of Defence, the Minister for Defence and the Minister for Defence Industry. Minister Conroy noted his commitment to working closely with the DILP Research Projects during our meeting and participants of this year's course will be pleased to know that a member of his staff will be sitting on the Research Project Review Panel at the end of the year.

My other main meetings in Canberra included a one-and-a-half-day industry engagement with the Australian Submarine Agency (ASA). State and Territory based Defence Industry and Defence Department representatives took part in an industry engagement workshop and nuclear capability training program conducted by the ASA. This is the first in a series of ongoing industry engagement; a lot of which will be critical for South Australia as we look to ramp up skills and knowledge for future SSN AUKUS requirements.

## Defence Evolving In SA

Closer to home, in SA we have a new Defence SA Chief Executive, Matt Opie and also SA's new Minister for Defence and Space Industries, Stephen Mullighan MP. Matt is known to most of us; he's a former Board Member of the DTC, has significant Defence, defence industry and academia experience, and we welcome his appointment to Defence SA.

We are delighted that Minister Millighan has accepted an invitation to come to our Defence Leaders Breakfast on 23 May. Like many of us, he's keen to learn more about the reviews and the impact on defence industry businesses. At the breakfast we will be asking a series of questions to assist the presenters in framing up their conversations in light with the data we're able to draw from participants. Your feedback is important, and it will go back to SA and Federal Government.

We have also recently sought your feedback on a number of new policies and amendments. Thank you to everyone who submitted their feedback, it has been instrumental in assisting us when putting together submissions to send to government on members behalf. Currently we are working on a submission regarding the recently released addition to the ASDEFCON suite of templates. The Minister for Defence Industry is asking for feedback: are they making a difference? Let us know? We will pass this forward and advocate if more needs to be done. If you have not yet sent in your feedback, make sure you do before the 31 May 2024. As the voice for industry, your insights are invaluable in shaping policy and practice, ensuring alignment with the sector's evolving needs.

## Sea, Air, Space: Us Round Up

Last month I had the opportunity to attend Sea, Air, Space at Washington DC. With an increasing focus on AUKUS, shipbuilding, submarines and supporting the US supply chain, the opportunity to engage with local industry associations, all of whom are grappling similar issues was important for DTC to figure out who to partner with on behalf of our members.

We're in early discussions with a couple of them, and at least one is likely to visit Australia during 2024 watch your inbox for details in the coming weeks to hear about US opportunities about the Virginia Class submarine supply chain opportunities and how the US is tackling its skills shortages. We will hold an industry engagement event for members to learn more about the US side of AUKUS, especially around the supply chain, training and collaboration opportunities between our defence industry and that of the US. I also attended a number of seminars while at the

trade show which looked at the Indo-Pacific, AUKUS, jobs and skills, workforce and submarines.

All presentations are now available on the 'Sea-Air-Space 2024 Panels' YouTube channel.

The key takeaways were:

- The opportunity for Australian companies ready to do business with the US is real.
- The US has significant capability and workforce issues in its supply chain in relation to the Virginia Class subs - DTC is doing further research in to where defence industry can come together to assist
- There is a lot that Australia can learn from the US and its efforts to fill skills shortages (inc engaging industry, with students, and society in general that can be harnessed)
- US Industry Associations with interests like those of the DTC are looking to partner with similar and likeminded companies in Australia. This partnership could be beneficial for our industry

Mike Hartas, Chair of the DTC, and I were also fortunate to attend the Pyne and Partners Defence Catalyst program during our time in Washington. The two and a half day program covered off AUKUS and defence industry intensive legislation and regulation discussions about AUKUS, innovation, and the 2024 US elections. Notably, a fireside chat with the Australian Ambassador to the US, the Hon Kevin Rudd, Minister Conroy and a briefing from Prof Emily Hilder, ASCA were all highlights of an outstanding program.

Key takeouts:

- When compared with the US and UK, Australia needs to be more transparent and proactive in its communications around AUKUS. More must be done as we join this very significant partnership.
- The upcoming US elections has everyone concerned about AUKUS: what can be put in its place prior to November that we see traction for Australia, the US and the UK? Export Controls and ITAR legislation being the tip of the iceberg.
- AUKUS Pillar 2: innovation is the real opportunity. What role is there for DTC here?

#### Lots To Do: We Need To Focus

On 30 May the DTC Board goes back into the bunker to work through the myriad of Federal, State and overseas demand signals to ensure we're prioritising and focusing on industry development and uplift. Where we focus, what we do and deliver and how members can and need to feed into this will be set after our meeting. While SA is slated to deliver a lot of Defence capability in future years (Hunter Class, future SSN AUKUS), it's the here and now that has us all concerned. Where are the opportunities for industry: in SA? In other States? Overseas?

As I reflect on the insights gleaned and the connections forged over the last month I am filled with a sense of optimism and anticipation for the future. The challenges ahead are indeed formidable, but so too are the opportunities waiting to be seized, and I look forward to working with our members and the wider defence sector as we grow and scale Australia's defence sector together.

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## Government Commits To Continuous Shipbuilding

It has been a whirlwind few months for Australian Defence, with analysts continuing to debate the merits of the National Defence Strategy, Integrated Investment Program, Defence Strategic Review and the Surface Combatant Review.

An updated Naval Shipbuilding and Sustainment Plan is also due to be released later this year.

## Unpacking The News

The launch of the National Defence Strategy and associated Integrated Investment Program promises to boost spending to \$330 billion in the coming decade, up \$50 billion from previous projections.

As a result, Australia's military investment will grow to 2.4 per cent of GDP by 2034.

Key investments announced by Minister for Defence, Richard Marles, include:

- \$63bn nuclear-powered subs and autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs)
- \$51bn for new ships
- \$16bn for attack drones,
- \$14bn for missiles

The DTC has welcomed the news and reiterated its call for certainty, to allow businesses to forward invest in the defence sector.

Minister for Defence Industry, Pat Conroy, said the record investment "will not only make the country safer, but also deliver dividends for industry and jobs for hardworking Australians.

"This fully funded plan ensures a continuous pipeline of investment that underscores the Albanese Government's unwavering commitment to developing Australia's sovereign defence industry, " Minister Conroy said.

## Continuous Shipbuilding

Earlier this year, the Federal Government recommitted to a continuous naval shipbuilding program, with major investments at the Osborne shipyard in South Australia and Henderson shipbuilding complex in Western Australia.

It said the "blueprint" would "grow a capable, resilient and competitive sovereign defence industrial base."

In South Australia, the construction of the Hunter class frigates at Osborne will sustain at least 2,000 jobs and create at least 500 new jobs over the next decade.

Under this plan, the Federal Government will enter into a build contract for the Hunter class frigates that sees construction start this year, with the final Hunter frigate to be delivered by 2043.

The Hunter class will be immediately followed by construction of the replacement for Navy's Hobart class destroyers.



"Combined with more than 4,000 estimated jobs created to build the new Submarine Construction Yard in South Australia and the more than 4,000 direct jobs to build conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines in Australia, Osborne will be at the epicentre of a naval shipbuilding jobs revolution in this country," the government stated.

In Western Australia, eight new general purpose frigates will be built at the Henderson precinct, and will enable a pathway to build six new Large Optionally Crewed Surface Vessels in Western Australia.

This is in addition to the strategic shipbuilder pilot which will see Army's Landing Craft Medium and Heavy (Littoral Manoeuvre Vessels), as well as the decision to acquire two new Evolved Cape-Class Patrol Boats, built at Henderson by Austal.

These projects will create at least 1,200 new local jobs over the next decade.

The planned Transition Capability Assurance (TransCAP) upgrades to the Anzac class will not proceed.

Two Anzac class frigates will be decommissioned close to their original planned withdrawal from service. The six remaining Anzac class frigates will be upgraded with enhanced maritime strike capabilities. Defence will work with industry partners to redeploy the Anzac class sustainment workforce across the Henderson precinct.

SA Premier Peter Malinauskas said the Federal Government's strategy confirmed a "continuous shipbuilding program in Adelaide has been locked in for decades to come.

"Hunter Class frigates will be continuously built in Adelaide through to 2043, and will be followed by the replacement for the Hobart Class Air Warfare Destroyers, which will also be built right here in Adelaide.

"This surface shipbuilding workforce is in addition to the more than 4000 workers who will be building nuclearpowered AUKUS submarines in the same vicinity.

"Our job now is to make sure we have the workforce ready to adopt these secure, highly skilled, well paid careers."



## QMS Advancing Its US Strategy

When SA Premier Peter Malinauskas tours US nuclear submarine yards in mid-May, he will find a steadily increasing Australian presence.

Among that contingent is Adelaide-based QMS (Quality Maritime Surveyors), well known for its work on the Collins-class submarines.

QMS CEO Crystal Kennedy and Director Shaun Kennedy have set up home in the US, with the goal of training Australia's shipbuilding workforce of the future.

They are establishing their US headquarters in the Hampton's Road area of Virginia, currently residing in the World Trade Center in Norfolk. The Hamptons Road alliance boasts the largest naval shipbuilding and submarine ports in the world.

QMS is also currently in planning phases for headquarters in Newport News in Virginia – home to the nuclear submarine shipyards – over the next 12 months.

## Strategy

US media reported that QMS "is interested in collaborating with shipbuilding contractors and technical institutes in the US and Australia to raise a

nuclear shipbuilding workforce in Australia."

QMS knows from years of experience that "to train a maritime technician, their hands on training must be performed on maritime Assets," Crystal explained.

"These vessels not only preserve our freedom and way of life, they also hold the naval and submariners that have dedicated their lives to this cause; our standard of excellence when performing our job has to be measured in remembrance of these facts."

QMS' business plan would involve Australian shipbuilders visiting Hampton Roads (maritime region) to learn from local shipbuilders, who also would travel to Australia to help train its workforce.

Under the AUKUS pact, Australia is due to take delivery of three nuclear-powered Virginia-class submarines by 2032, before construction switches to Australia.

This will require an enormous skilling program to prepare an Australian workforce of 8,500 people.

Crystal said QMS is prepared to take on its role and means to understand what that looks like. Its programs of training will strengthen by working within the allegiance and coincide with the needs of AUKUS.

"It is important we do the hard work now to ensure

we have the highly skilled workforce we will need in South Australia for decades to come," said Premier Malinauskas in an official statement in April when he announced his trip.

Crystal – who is also Director of QMS' Apprenticeship & Training Division - agrees: "There's a huge skills shortage for people to work on Australia's nuclear subs - but also for non-destructive testing workers and all other trade workers.

"The time for this preparation is now. We have a lot to learn together in this trilateral pact and QMS is positioned to do so.

"Compared to the size of what we have right now at Osborne, you're going to see an increase in size still hard to imagine in minds' eye."

Founded in 2011, QMS's Defence experience in the maritime defence sector is solid, including more than 13 year's experience running combined inspection and remediation on Collins-class submarines.

Australian-owned and operated, it provides personalised non-destructive testing, inspection and production services to the defence, mining, oil and gas and manufacturing sectors. This includes coating and corrosion surveys, AICIP pressure vessel inspection, piping, hull, electrical, composite material inspections, non-destructive testing inspections and NDT Level III consultancy.

The work is conducted under NATA and ISO Quality, Environmental and Safety accreditation.

In a recent profile on QMS, the Virginian Pilot reported: "The business is one of hundreds of Australian companies interested in supporting the trilateral alliance in which the countries agree to share technologies so Australia can have access to nuclearpowered submarines."

#### Challenges

One of the few issues encountered by the Kennedys' has been differences in NDT procedures and testing specifications between the US and the other two members of the AUKUS triumvirate, which can and does affect supply chain issues.

"We can all learn from each other to create the best outcome from such a historical alliance," said Crystal.

"The whole point of getting this pact is to actually train all technicians to grasp a full understanding of what this training looks like for Australia.

"I think there needs to be more awareness that this is not going to fall into your lap. If you want to be a part of '2+1', then you need to take action now.

"If we're going to be sharing information and products then we need to know how to test all of them."

Crystal said the US defense sector was very welcoming of Australian businesses and urged companies not to 'miss the boat'.

"But truly, America is open to this and excited for this; I urge you to go over and reach out.

"They need the submarines, they're worried about Asia-Pacific, AUKUS is happening," she said.

"They are very keen for Australian and UK businesses to come over here."

#### Contacts

Crystal recommended reaching out to the Virginia Maritime Association which includes all the key players in the industry.

She said Linda Green, Executive Director of Economic Development at Southern Virginia Regional Alliance, is



"QMS knows from years of experience that "to train a maritime technician, their hands on training must be performed on maritime Assets."

happy to take prospective business partners through the Navy's new Additive Manufacturing Centre of Excellence in Danville.

And Jared Chalk from the Hampton Road Alliance is planning to be in Adelaide in June, seeking business partners while discussing the 14 regions that make up the biggest defense centre in the US.

In November last year, the SA and Federal Governments released a detailed strategy to grow the defence industry workforce. The South Australian Defence Industry Workforce and Skills Report and Action Plan notes that Australia needs "a highly educated and highly trained workforce, equipped with cutting edge skills for the future."

The Report details 22 initiatives to further address workforce challenges and grow the South Australian defence industry workforce from 3,500 direct jobs to more than 8,500 in the 2040s.

QMS plans to continue its development in the US and continue its role in Australia.

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## Adelaide Business Leads In Sustainability

Asset Reliability Inspections (ARI), based in Adelaide, became the first Non-Destructive Testing (NDT) and Inspection Services provider in Australia to be certified as 'Climate Active Carbon Neutral' by the federal government in 2022.

The motivation behind this achievement was twofold. Firstly, both CEO Neil Young and COO Nick Ferguson are deeply committed to environmental stewardship.

"Neil and I both have kids under two, and it's about trying to do our part to look after the environment for the next generation," Nick explained.

Secondly, they believe they are strategically positioning their business for a future where choice might be limited.

"The goal is to get to net zero," Nick said.

"Eighty-seven companies in the ASX200 have net zero plans, and the Australian government is clearly aligned with the Paris Agreement to reach net zero by 2050.

"We're leading from the front on something that we believe will one day be a mandatory requirement for doing business with government and the government supply chain."

ARI is already collaborating with numerous renewable energy companies, whose purpose is to reduce emissions. They are also helping organisations in their journey towards lowering their carbon foot print.

"We've got companies in mining, oil, and gas who are looking to their supply chains to help lower emissions and innovate change," he said. "For example, we're using developed technologies that can detect fugitive emissions, such as leaking methane at gas plants. We can directly assist them through our services."

## **Employee Appeal**

Being seen as an attractive place to work is also crucial, according to Nick. "We aim to be an employer of choice, particularly for the younger generation. We are finding that our carbon neutral certification significantly influences job applications."

Achieving this status involved a two-step process that began by identifying where ARI itself was 'leaking carbon' through waste, travel, accommodation and other business operations.

"Once we determined our scope of emissions, we worked to reduce them as much as possible," said Nick.

"Today's technology doesn't allow us to reach net zero without any emissions, but we can substantially lower them. We then re-assess and offset the remainder through local schemes, which are plentiful in Australia.

"Everyone is capable of reducing their emissions."

#### Relocation

Founded in Perth, ARI opened a third office in Adelaide last November, drawn by the city's pivotal national role, ARI's expansion plans, and Adelaide's promising major projects in renewables and Defence.

However, Nick conceded that the defence industry presents one of the more formidable challenges in achieving net zero.

"Our work with Defence has initially focused on diversity and equality, but we expect supplier carbon consciousness to become a factor soon," he said.

"While it's quite ambitious to aim for a diesel-electric submarine to be carbon neutral. The most effective way for governments to reduce their emissions is through their supply chains by partnering with clean, green contractors. This ultimately results in projects with lower emissions."

## Defence Demand

"The appetite for such change across defence sectors is growing, "Nick observed. "Every conversation we've had has been extremely positive concerning our efforts to lower our emissions and achieve carbon neutrality.

"This shift has translated into increased business opportunities, with an uptick in high-

## "Everyone is capable of reducing their emissions."

profile clients over the past two years, which we attribute to our carbon-neutral status. However, some sceptics believe it's an impossible task – it isn't.

"Commitment and a deep understanding of your business processes are key. While individual efforts may seem small, collectively, they can lead to significant environmental impacts."

## Mission Possible?

Even Nick acknowledges that achieving net zero in the defence industry may never be fully attainable.

"I can't guarantee that, but I can tell you that other industries have made significant strides by focusing on their supply chains. If your supply chain is carbon neutral, that's an excellent start," he said.

"Then, you can use carbon offsets to match your remaining emissions, but these should always be paired with improved practices. A company that doesn't change its practices and relies solely on buying offsets is missing the point of true sustainability.

"Everyone is capable of reducing their emissions. Once that's achieved, you can purchase offsets to balance out the remainder.

"The defence sector can adopt this model – prioritise the supply chain, reduce emissions internally as much as possible, and then compensate with credits. While carbon credits come at a cost, the efficiencies gained often reduce operational costs, offering both financial and environmental benefits."



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## Para Bellum Rising Star

While Para Bellum Solutions may still be something of a newcomer in the defence sector, its work with veterans is seeing it quickly climb the ranks.

After being nominated by six reservists, late last year it took out the Private Sector - Medium Business Award at the ADF Reserves South Australian Employer Support Awards. The company also ranked 12 in Fast Movers SA Top 25 awards.

It's the kind of recognition that makes Managing Director Jake Kearsley justifiably proud.

Jake served in the Army full-time for 15 years, before setting up his veteran-owned project management consulting firm after working in industry for several years.

He remains a senior officer with the Army Reserve.

"We help our customers navigate the bureaucracy of Defence," he said.

Those customers include businesses both home and abroad who may have limited or no experience within the sector.

But it's Para Bellum's noble work repurposing and finding new careers for veterans that has drawn particular praise.

"Over time, I've realised there are a lot of veterans and reservists who are undervalued and there was an opportunity to place them in roles that really leveraged their skills and knowledge," Jake said.

"It was relatively straightforward for me to see their values where others couldn't do that as easily.

"Some of those values and qualities, such as reliability, resilience and flexibility, are obvious to potential employers; others not so much.

"Some of the qualities that I think are more relevant are communication skills, both verbal and written. The ability to follow procedures and help develop consistent procedures, and the desire to work inside the framework of consistent procedures.

"Some will say communication is a soft skill and it is.

"But it actually requires a hard capacity to deliver on communication, whether that's delivering a brief, taking notes, writing a brief or communicating by email. "I've found you get taught how to do that well in Defence, its discipline that's not taught widely in the civilian sector."

## Capability enabler

Para Bellum works hard to place experienced veterans into key roles including project management, systems engineering, integrated logistics, and defence technology, while creating pathways for less experienced veterans to enter the workforce through entry level positions such as project assistance and support roles.

"Because our clients are largely Defence, we're capitalising on veterans' knowledge of Defence that perhaps another business might not be able to," he said. Support is offered to all types of veterans. "Those who have a methodical, staged approach to leaving the service generally have little trouble finding new roles," Jake said.

"Generally, most veterans do well.

"It's probably true that they take up to five years to find their niche and they might move through a couple of different roles before they do.

"But some struggle – those who have to leave the service involuntarily, and that's typically through a medical issue.

"And because their move is unplanned and sooner than they expect, they haven't had the time to prepare so we need to provide support for them.

"Then there's people in between who decide to leave fairly abruptly of their own volition but have a bit of a delay in finding what they want to do.

"Sixty-one per cent of Para Bellum's staff have served in the ADF and have been successfully placed into rewarding positions in defence industry. Our staff are high performers, many have been recognised by their peers, receiving performance awards and commendations.

"Veterans are achieving and excelling, and it's this kind of recognition that should remind industry and the public of the value veterans bring to the workplace and the community."

Those recognitions have included Outstanding Achievement and Dedication in Risk Management, and Excellence in Change Management. Most recently one of their reservists became a finalist in the Defence Connect Defence & National Security Workforce Awards, in the category of Best Project Manager under 35.

"They are contributing their skills to Defence capability in a civilian capacity, while many of them concurrently excel in their ADF reserve duties," he said.

## Stereotypes

Jake's view is that there is a stereotype that impacts the public perception of the veteran community.

"Although there has been a well-intentioned focus on Veteran mental health, PTSD and underemployment, more could be done to highlight the general successes and high performance of most ex-service personnel." He's also concerned that the recent Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide will likely exacerbate this stereotype.

"The narrative needs to be balanced," Jake said, "The last thing we need is for Veteran employment outcomes to be negatively impacted."

While not in favour of specific employment quotas in particular industries, Jake said there needs to be a wider appreciation of the talents many Australian businesses are overlooking.

"The important thing is for broader industry to acknowledge that there's a whole heap of capability out there that could be going unnoticed," Jake added.

#### New Challenge

The decision from Canberra in June 2023 to purge a fifth - or as many as 2000 - contractor jobs from the Department has only exacerbated the issue.

Jake conceded, "it was probably due for a bit of a reset".

But it's made his task of finding new roles for veterans more challenging.

"It's had an impact in two ways

"One is there are fewer jobs available. Secondly, in an attempt to retain people, they've made it a little bit harder for service members to become contractors back to the Commonwealth.

"The 'no-poaching' rule does not apply to medically discharged veterans.

"But if someone is voluntarily leaving, it's much harder for me to hire them at the moment."

#### **Giving Back**

Para Bellum's response was to align itself with the newly formed South Australian Veteran Employer Network.

The SA government initiative seeks to connect employers across both the public and private sectors with a view to recognising the value veterans bring to the workplace.

It also acknowledges the potential need for upskilling or additional training to perform those roles. "There is the need for some specific training in certain skills or systems," Jake said.

"One thing we've been able to take advantage of is the Skilling Australia's Defence Industry (SADI) grant program.

"It helps provide training for our people to improve their employability and capability.

"We're focusing on where we can help those people out because quite often, their discharge has come unexpectedly and they are also unable to serve in the reserve."

With the assistance of SADI they established the Para Bellum Upskilling Program 2022-2024 to enable continuous improvement through training and skill development.

So far, they have invested \$100,000.00 into professional development courses to meet industry needs.

Para Bellum believes that by assisting Veterans who are navigating the challenging terrain of transitioning from the ADF, some with health conditions, they will continue to best support individuals post-service to successfully translate their skills and experiences to fulfilling careers within the defence industry.

"By providing ongoing training and learning opportunities for our people, we can adapt and evolve to effectively fill skill shortages and capability gaps," Jake said.

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## Resilience Icon's Vision to End Engineering Shortage

Overcoming the crippling shortage of manufacturing engineers will require unprecedent levels of cooperation, according to Brisbane-based Elexon Electronics.

Sandra Simpson, Elexon's Marketing, Engagement and Business Development Manager, has joined calls for a more coordinated approach to develop young engineers.

"We can see a gap in understanding between industry expectations and academia. We try to bridge it by engaging in closer communication and collaboration with universities and engineering students," she said.

Elexon specialises in the design, development and manufacture of high-tech electronics for Defence, as well as a range of other industries including mining, medical, automotive, aerospace and renewable energy.

Sandra said finding enough qualified design, software, manufacturing and production engineers remains a significant challenge.

"There is a generational gap that we momentarily have to try to overcome even by recruiting from overseas," she said.

She also pointed out that this becomes a hurdle for Elexon being a Defence supplier. "Working for Defence has stringent employment regulations and requirements, which means that we simply can't employ everyone."

Elexon does its best to mitigate the problem by working closely with the University of the Sunshine Coast.

"We bring new prospective engineers to our facility to show them what it is like to work in this sector and what projects they can work on to engage them.

"It is the best way to attract interns and future employees. But that is the slow way out of this problem," Sandra said. Industry 4.0 attracts attention but she said the industry itself needs to become more proactive by improving how it sells itself.

"We need to be a little bit better at explaining what it is that we do and how exciting the future in engineering, manufacturing and product development can be for those interested in this career path," she said.

"Manufacturing still has this misconception that can be a bit dirty.

"In our case, it's not dirty at all. It's sophisticated. It is smart, it is automated and super efficient.

"At Elexon, we've got the top of the range industry 4.0 facility where everything works together. It's all seamless. It's smart and sexy.

"There is complete traceability of the manufacturing process, it means that every step, component, and action involved in the production of a product can be traced, documented, and verified throughout the entire manufacturing journey. This traceability is crucial for quality control, compliance, and overall process optimization. It is fascinating. We work with the best equipment possible.

"It's about us increasing awareness about what is possible and what you actually can do and what facilities we have here in Australia."

## Misconceptions

She remains staggered by the number of people who believe advanced manufacturing occurs entirely offshore.

"Quite often we hear, 'I didn't know that we still do electronics manufacturing here in Australia. I thought we take everything from overseas. "Advanced manufacturing is one of the most crucial industries in Australia. It is the backbone of our economy," Sandra excitedly says.

## Incredible Resilience

Elexon is thriving despite setbacks that would have sent many businesses to the wall.

It won the DTC's Resilience Award in 2022 for its determination in continuing to support Defence customers through the challenges of Covid.

Perhaps that experience fortified workers for what was to come – a devastating fire caused by the explosion of a lithium battery.

Fortunately, extremely valuable components stored in a thermally-controlled depository were rescued from the ashes.

But precious little else survived the fire, save for the DTC Resilience award which CEO Frank Faller was able to salvage like a badge of honour.

"It was like proof of the resilience we have that we actually can make it - and we did, " Sandra said.

When the toxic fumes subsided and the dirt was wiped away, Elexon employees worked for two months in Elexon's undercover car park, undertaking the arduous task of meticulously cleaning the precious rescued components.

Within six months, Elexon was back in business, just 500 metres along the same road in Brendale where it had once stood.

## Growth Through Adversity

Elexon Electronics now operates on a site of 3000m<sup>2</sup>, nearly three times the size of its former home.



"Elexon will be bigger and better. We now have spacious and more advanced facility than before and we are hiring new staff so there was a silver lining, not that we would recommend it to anyone, "said Sandra

"It was like a team bonding exercise in a lot of ways.

"And it was really amazing to see the support the community gave us.

"But valuable lessons have been learned

"We now store our lithium batteries outside the building

"We built a special shipping container for their storage which is air-conditioned 24 hours.

"When we use the batteries for assembly, we work on them inside the building but they never stay there overnight, just to ensure this never happens again."

The company is also vocal about tightening legislation

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## INNOVATION

and improving safety standards for lithium batteries in Queensland

"We would like to help so it doesn't happen to anyone else, "Sandra added.

## Working With Defence

Many more lessons have been learned regarding how to navigate the choppy waters of working with Defence.

"We can rely on our bread and butter business in the area of product development and high-end electronics manufacturing for niche industries. This part of the business creates continuous and steady income. When it comes to defence projects, we keep the contribution at around 20-25," Sandra explained.

She said being patient, agile and flexible are all critical when working within the sector.

"For "defence newbies" being able to ask for help

within the supply chain. Now, four years later, we are actively involved in exciting projects that are now part of Defence initiatives."

was crucial and helped us to navigate the very complex defence industry.

"When we joined DTC (Defence Teaming Centre) 3 years ago, we were allocated an advisor, who helped us understand the Defence environment.

"Thanks to networking, government support and help of industry associations, we moved within the supply chain fairly quickly and now four years later, we are actually contributing through some very exciting projects that Defence has now.

"Thinking laterally is also important," she said.

"Look for different opportunities that might not necessarily be linked to what the company does straight away but can be something else on the horizon.

"Just stay in touch all the time and invest time networking, meeting with other suppliers and competitors helps."

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## DTC Welcomes New Laws

The Defence Teaming Centre has welcomed the Australian Parliament's passing of legislation that will support local industry by unlocking defence trade, innovation and collaboration with AUKUS partners.

The Defence Trade Controls Amendment Act 2024 (DTC Act) protects cutting-edge military technologies by enhancing the export control regime.

It will fast-track the delivery of high-end capabilities to the Australian Defence Force by streamlining trade and collaboration with AUKUS partners, to help improve Australia's capability edge.

"The Defence Trade Controls Amendment Act provides defence industry, science and research sectors with greater opportunities for collaboration and trade with our AUKUS partners without the burdensome red tape," said Deputy Prime Minister, Richard Marles.

"This will benefit defence industry in Australia, unlocking \$5 billion – more than half of our annual exports – to our AUKUS partners."

#### How Does It Work?

This new legislation removes red tape in defence trade with AUKUS partners by supporting the establishment of a licence-free environment for Australian industry, higher education and research sectors.

The Federal Government believes it will unlock investment and collaboration opportunities for Australian defence industry under the AUKUS framework, with the national exemption for export permits to the US and UK to benefit an estimated \$5 billion in annual defence exports. The Safeguarding Australia's Military Secrets Act 2024 (SAMS Act) will keep Australian secrets in Australian hands, ensuring military secrets remain safe.

The Government argues that this reform strengthens the laws already in place by enhancing the Government's ability to prevent the unwanted transfer of sensitive Defence information to foreign militaries.

The SAMS Act is about protecting Australia's military knowledge, skills and experience, as well as regulating the military training that Australians may provide to foreign countries.

Defence will continue to work with industry, higher education and research sector partners to ensure the effective and efficient implementation of these significant reforms.

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## **REDARC** Outlines Incredible Growth Plans

Electronics manufacturer REDARC's new Global Centre of Excellence at Lonsdale, South Australia, is a bold investment.

It is also a statement of intent about its enormous ambition - and confidence in its ability to deliver.

"Our 10 year plan will see REDARC Defence grow to be the size that REDARC Electronics is now," said Executive General Manager Scott Begbie.

"Not in people but in revenue because we'll get smarter and smarter."

It would be an astronomical leap for the Defence arm of the Adelaide-based company that was formed in 1979, designing and manufacturing vehicle ignition systems. (In fact, REDARC's name is not an acronym as some think, but is actually derived from the spark formed in the ignition system of original owner Bob Mackie's Porsche.)

"REDARC products are already high quality so there's a logical, natural extension to diversify into Defence. Now when you walk around a trade show, most people think REDARC is a Defence company now. The main players in Defence all know who REDARC are," said Scott.

"We perform not only Defence work, but also the bespoke low-volume work undertaken by the group. This approach allows REDARC Electronics to continue on its journey of high-volume mass production as they grow worldwide."

REDARC's growth into Defence and Space prompted its need to secure a new facility.

It was a move more about opportunity than the identification of a specific gap in the market, according to Scott.

"The Centre of Excellence will bring together REDARC Defence and Space and also all the product development from the larger REDARC group and it puts that with testing and validation capabilities all under one roof," said Scott.

#### New Site

Hence the need for the Lonsdale site, which was only settled on last September. "It's definitely a work in progress," Scott said. "It's a multi-staged plan with the first phase approved and underway."

The site boasts more than 3500 square metres of floor space over two levels and there is ample room for further growth on more than 1.2ha of land.

"The intention is to have state of the art Engineering capability within a high-level secure site which will position us for a whole range of secure work across Defence," said Scott.

Up to 130 people are expected to fill the completed facility, requiring "a sizeable increase in the workforce" and creating more jobs.

"This isn't just a whim, it's a long-term play central to our 10 year plan," Scott said.

"In our market we have the Tier 1 companies at the top and the SMEs at the bottom. There's no real in-between at the moment. We're aiming to fill that void as a tier 2 integrator – not just supplying product, we want to start integrating product and solutions."

## Land Forces Unveiling

REDARC will unveil its Ineos Grenadier at Land Forces in Melbourne in September, fitted out with its own power solutions, while also showcasing other technologies and products from its partners.

"REDARC products are already high quality so there's a logical, natural extension to diversify into Defence. Now when you walk around a trade show, most people think REDARC is a Defence company now. The main players in Defence all know who REDARC are."

But deployable power solutions are very much powering the award-winning company's charge into the Defence sector.

"Obviously in this era, there's a need for powering up autonomous assets," said Scott.

"Everybody's got drones, they've got robotic dogs and a host of other assets. Power is very important, especially power density.

"You need reliable power so that when you're in the middle of nowhere, you can still keep things running."

Scott said that need for power "is not going to go away any time soon.

"Power for assets in the field is only going to get more and more demanding but REDARC has the ability not just in manufacturing PCBs, we can design product, service and build it, all in one facility in Australia.

"There's not too many outside the Primes that can do that."

#### Family Owned

Anthony and Michele Kittel purchased REDARC in 1997 and have had 100 per cent ownership of it since 2002.

"Anthony's a passionate South Australian driven to manufacture in South Australia which in turn supports local SA industry," said Scott.

"If he sees an opportunity, he's not shy to invest into it to keep growing the company."





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The valuation of tech-focused defence businesses is on the rise, fuelled by the farreaching potential applications of intellectual property. Amid strong merger and acquisition (M&A) activity in the defence industry, companies are actively seeking growth opportunities in a sector marked by significant expansion and investment focus.

Market participants are focusing on intellectual property, both in terms of its current utilisation and broader potential. Potential buyers are taking note of companies with solid contracts and demonstrated applications of proprietary technology across various defence related domains. In some cases, companies may be underestimating their full value, which could lead to them selling themselves short during negotiations.

Despite the rising interest rate environment, small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) are actively participating in M&A activities, indicating robust enthusiasm. Australia's long-term defence investments, including electronic warfare capabilities, and substantial upcoming projects are driving a positive industry outlook.

Certain players within the defence industry may be involved in technology-based research and development activities, that may have valuable intellectual property. It is not solely about current earnings, but about the untapped revenue potential this IP can unlock in markets beyond defence, ranging from space exploration to sports fields.

## Beyond the current numbers

Valuing an SME in the defence sector often goes beyond traditional financial metrics and should encapsulate the firm's strategic positioning within the market, its historical performance, and its future growth potential. The common valuation approaches are:

Earnings Multiple Method

Involves the multiplying of normalised earnings and considers growth prospects, contract pipelines, market conditions and the acquirer's cost of capital.

Revenue Multiple Method

Involves the multiplying of annual revenue and is often applied to firms with high revenue growth models.

Discounted Cash Flow
 Discounts forecast cash flows to th

Discounts forecast cash flows to their present value. Often applied where revenue and cost certainties are high, such as defence contracts with predictable cash flows.

• Other Specialist Valuation Methods A whole business valuation may be combined with subset techniques, such as IP valuations, to help ensure individual components of an enterprise are carefully considered.

## Factors Influencing Valuations in the Defence Sector

While IP and technology can unlock future commercialisation opportunities that add substantial value to an enterprise, other key areas that come under the valuation spotlight include:

- The overall trajectory of the defence industry
- The firm's profitability, revenue trends, cash flow stability and financial management
- The firm's market position and brand reputation
- Calibre of management and staff, company culture, and the firm's ongoing ability to attract and retain quality, skilled people

## Get on the front foot

It is imperative for business owners to have a clear understanding of the current and future value of their enterprise and where it lies before entering commercial negotiations. They must also understand the early actions they can take to safeguard this value before discussing price.

This means taking a proactive approach to engage with an experienced valuations specialist early.

Obtaining specialist valuation advice when considering whether to buy or sell a business leads to informed decision making.

## Get in touch

If you would like to understand the value of your defence enterprise, contact Lee Fuller at **lee.fuller@williambuck.com**. William Buck has a team of qualified valuers with extensive experience in the defence sector.



## DILP Leading The Way For Emerging Industry Leaders



Defence Industry Leaders Program - participants of DILP 2024 | Cohort 2

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The Defence Teaming Centre welcomed two new cohorts to its flagship Defence Industry Leadership Program (DILP) for 2024 at the program's official launch on Tuesday 12 March.

DILP, now in its 14 year, is specifically tailored to meet Australia's future defence industry requirements. Developed in collaboration with key defence industry leaders and Skills Lab, a Sage Group Company, it is a pivotal leadership program for emerging and mid-level defence industry personnel.

Notably, the program is now funded as part of the Commonwealth's and South Australian Government's 2023 Defence Industry Workforce and Skills Report and Action Plan and plays a significant role in upskilling and retaining both emerging and transitional mid-career mangers and leaders within the defence sector.

Rowena Le Quesne, DILP Course Coordinator said the support of the state government had allowed for the expansion of the program, which can usually only take a maximum of 25 participants each year.

"With the greatest upgrade to Australia's defence capability taking place over the next decade I am pleased the Commonwealth have recognised this by offering 25 extra places on the program to help bridge the workforce and skills gap and ensure industry is ready to meet the new priorities of the Australian Defence Force, " Rowena said.

"By bringing together professionals from diverse backgrounds, DILP fosters a unique environment for cross-pollination of ideas and expertise. It's not

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Defence Industry Leaders Program - participants of DILP 2024 | Cohort 1.



The 2024 DILP Launch featured three guest speakers who shared their leadership journey. From left: Glen Gallagher from Boeing Defence Australia and DILP Alumni 2021, Assistant Minister to the Deputy Premier, Rhiannon Pearce MP, and John Godwin from Cambrian Executive and DILP Alumni 2010.



Members of the DILP Alumni committee. Top row from left: Peter Svensdotter from Ultra Maritime, Alex Morabito from Marshall Day Acoustics, Tom Snowden from BAE Systems Australia, Leighanne Middleton from Luerssen Australia, Ellen Mitten from Raytheon Australia and Michael Paay from PMB Defence. Bottom row from left: Rian Whitby from DEWC and Sarah Tellis from Nova Systems.

just a leadership program, it's a collective effort to fortify the future of Australia's sovereign defence industrial base.

"Our graduates emerge with not only a nationally recognised Diploma of Leadership and Management, but with the skills and knowledge to effectively lead and manage multi-party collaborations and an understanding of the complexities of the defence industry.

"Our commitment is to empower these emerging leaders with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead."

More than 110 people celebrated the launch of DILP 2024 at Ayers House, with DILP Ambassador, Minister for Defence Industry, Pat Conroy, providing a statement thanking the Defence Teaming Centre for delivering the program and helping to upskill more than 300 defence industry leaders for the benefit of the broader Australian defence industrial base.

Echoing his sentiments was Dr Susan Close, Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science and Minister for Defence and Space Industries who said DILP has supported hundreds of mid-career defence industry professionals to grow their confidence and capability as decision-makers.

"Recognising the success of this program to-date, the South Australian Government is proud to partner with industry to fund an increased number of DILP participants in 2024, strengthening supply chain businesses by upskilling the people within," Minister Close said.

"These are the future leaders our state will rely upon to fulfil the major defence projects on South Australia's horizon."

This year's DILP cohort is comprised of participants from diverse backgrounds, from engineering, accounting, communications, business administration, computer science and more.

Upon completion of the course participants can go on to complete the DILP Advanced Diploma, which launches in 2025, or they can undertake an MBA at the University of South Australia with DILP graduates receiving one credit point going towards this program.

## Keeping up with Workplace Law Changes Significant further Reforms to the Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)

#### By Dylan Steel and Alex Dollman

## What's happened recently?

The Federal Labor Government has continued its efforts to strengthen the rights of Australian workers by undertaking a second round of reforms to the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) **("the Act")**.

The Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Closing Loopholes No. 2) Act 2024 (Cth) received Royal Assent on 26 February 2024.

## Closing the Loopholes

In 2023, the Parliament passed round one of the "Closing the Loopholes" reforms by introducing legislative amendments to the regulation of labour hire workers, criminalising wage-theft, increased union delegate rights, and addressing industrial manslaughter.

The key reforms arising from Closing Loopholes No.2 concern:

- New statutory definitions for employee, employer and casual employment;
- A new pathway for casual employment to be converted to permanent employment at initiative of the employee;
- Increased protections for independent contractors through changes to the regulation of sham contract arrangements; and
- Importantly, the introduction of a statutory right to disconnect outside of work hours.

## Statutory Definition of Employee and Employer

From 26 August 2024, there will be a new approach to determining the ordinary meaning of employee and employer, by "ascertaining the real substance, practical reality and true nature of the relationship between the individual and the person". The new section 15AA of the Act provides that the real substance, practical reality and true nature of the working relationship may be ascertained by considering the *"totality of the relationship"* and that regard must be had to:

- The terms of the contract governing the relationship; and
- Other factors including, but not limited to, how the contract is performed in practice.

This amendment marks a return to the approach applying a multifactional test and overturns the principles enunciated in the High Court's decisions in *CFMMEU v Personnel Contracting Pty Ltd 25* [2022] HCA 1 and *ZG Operations Australia Pty Ltd v Jamsek [2022]* 26 HCA 2, which suggested that the working relationship between parties (within certain situations) could be determined by reference to the written contract alone.

## Sham Contract Arrangements – from 27 February 2024

As a result of the reforms, it will be harder for employers to defend allegations of sham contracting. Employers are now required to prove that they reasonably believed that they entered into a contract for service.

Section 103 of the Act now provides that in determining whether an employer could have reasonably held this view, regard must be had to the size and nature of the employer's enterprise and any other relevant matters.

## Casual Employees Change – from 26 August 2024

From 26 August 2024, the amendments to section 15A of the Act provide that the following pre-conditions must be met for an employee to be considered a casual employee of an employer:

- The employment relationship must be characterised by an absence of a firm advance commitment to continuing and indefinite work; and
- The employee would be entitled to a casual loading or a specific rate of pay for casual employees under the terms of a fair work instrument if the employee were a casual employee, or the employee is entitled to such a loading or rate of pay under the contract of employment.
- Section 15A provides that whether the employment relationship is characterised by an absence of a firm advance commitment to continuing and indefinite work is to be assessed:
- On the basis of the real substance, practical reality and true nature of the employment relationship;
- On the basis that a firm advance commitment can be in the form of the contract of employment or, in addition to the terms of that contract, in the form of a mutual understanding or expectation between the employer and employee;
- By having regard as to whether there is an inability of the employer to elect to offer, or not offer, work or an inability of the employee to elect to accept or reject work (and whether this occurs in practice);
- Whether having regard to the nature of the employer's enterprise, it is reasonably likely that there will be future availability of continuing work in that enterprise of the kind usually performed by the employee;
- Whether there are full-time employees or part-time employees performing the same kind of work in the employer's enterprise that is usually performed by the employee;
- Whether there is a regular pattern of work for the employee.

Interestingly, some of the previous reforms enacted with

respect to the process for converting casual employment to permanent employment have been wound back.

The new procedure, which is available to casual employers with at least 12 months tenure with a small business (15 or less employees), or 6 months tenure if the employer is not a small business, requires:

- The casual employee to make a written request for conversion to permanent employment;
- The employer to consult with the employee; and
- Following consultation, and within 21 days of receiving the request, the employer to respond in writing to accept or decline the request.

An employer may only decline the request:

- If the employment relationship should be properly characterised as casual;
- On the basis of fair and reasonable operational requirements; or
- On the basis that the acceptance would cause the employer to be in breach of statutory obligations with respect to recruitment
- If the matter cannot be resolved between the parties, the Fair Work Commission has jurisdiction to determine the dispute. Further, the Fair Work Commission has powers to issue civil penalties to employers who misrepresent employment as casual if it is not.

• Right to disconnect - from 26 August 2024 Another important amendment concerns the right of employees to disconnect. An employee may refuse to monitor, read or respond to contact, or attempted contact, from an employer, or a third party, outside of the employee's working hours unless the refusal is unreasonable.

In determining whether a refusal is unreasonable, section 333M of the Act provides that the following factors (which is not an exhaustive list) may be taken into account.

- The reason for the contract or attempted contact;
- How the contact or attempted contact is made and the level of disruption the contact or attempted contact causes the employee;
- The extent to which the employee is paid to be perform work outside of normal working hours or be available to work;
- The nature of the employee's role and level of responsibility;
- The employee's personal circumstances, including caring responsibilities.

If there is a dispute arising from an employee's right to disconnect, the parties must first attempt to resolve it at the workplace level and if there is no resolution, the Fair Work Commission may determine the dispute.

## Other reforms – from 27 February and 26 August 2024

Further changes introduced by Closing the Loopholes No. 2 concern the right of Unions to obtain an exemption certificate from the Fair Work Commission to exercise rights of entry without 24 hours' minimum notice requirement, if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the entity has been engaged in underpayment of wages.

Alongside this, the reforms also include intractable bargaining related changes as well as granting increased protections to regulated workers like workers in the digital platform or employee-like gig economy.

#### Major Takeaways for Businesses

This further round of reforms emphasises the need for employers to review their contractual arrangements with all staff and particularly, with respect to casual employees and independent contractors.

We expect that it will be a challenge for businesses (at least in the initial stages) to manage out of hours communications in an era where flexible work hours are common many in professional settings.

Jones Harley Toole is here to provide and assist members to navigate these fast-paced changes and members are encouraged to seek assistance in understanding how these changes are to be implemented and plan for additional obligations as they arise.

Please call our Employment and Workplace Services team at +61 8414 3333 if you require advice or assistance.





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## ADCG Nuclear Consultancy Group Nuclear-Powered Submarine Masterclasses

Much water has flowed under the bridge since the bombshell AUKUS Pillar One announcement back in September 2021. Little information has since been forthcoming to provide Australia's SMEs with the knowledge and confidence to be proactive and invest in these potential business opportunities as the tidal wave of AUKUS industry ramps up to build these nationally significant leviathans of the sea.

ADCG's Nuclear Consultancy Group has been working hard to rectify a small part of this enormous national enterprise. To prepare the Australian Submarine Agency, state and local governments, defence industry and academia, to bring AUKUS Pillar One to a successful reality, we at ADCG have produced two Masterclasses that aim to plug some of the gap in knowledge and understanding of what it means to be stewards of Nuclear-Powered Conventionally armed submarines. As a market leader with access to global nuclear talent, ADCG has developed two Masterclasses to inform you about the Nuclear Eco-System and Nuclear-Powered Submarines, so you too can pose those hard questions to the right authorities. These two courses have been put together by expert, former nuclear-powered submarine officers, with operational experience from the UK, US and Australia. They are designed to provide an introductory level overview to educate personnel involved, or who may become involved, in any aspect AUKUS Pillar One.

Masterclass 101 aims to provide enough information for attendees to return to their workplace with an enhanced understanding about nuclear-powered submarines. Without this information it is very hard for those in the dark to formulate the right questions to get the answers you require to undertake effective workplace planning. Masterclass 101 aims to reduce your knowledge gap and explains how to better prepare yourself for the introduction of Australian nuclear-powered submarines. In 90 minutes, you will learn from an ex-nuclear submariner about how they operate, what the operational differences are between nuclear and conventional submarines, learn relevant terminology for AUKUS Nuclear powered submarine enterprise, understand

what it means, and find out how to contribute to achieving that all important social licence we as a nation require to operate these national assets.

**Masterclass 102** aims to provide those attending with a deeper dive into the nuclearpowered submarine eco structure and provide a more in-depth understanding of nuclear-powered submarines and how building, operating, and sustaining them will be integrated within an Australian context. In half a day, you will learn about Australia's existing nuclear foundations, the global rules and regulations that are already in force, pathways on how to up-skill the Australian workforce, and finally, how nuclear safety and security is applied in support of nuclear-powered submarines, which requires a national cultural shift to manage and operate these nuclear submarines.

Both courses come with comprehensive course brochures for you take away, with plenty of space available for you to take additional notes for your future reference.

ADCG is proud to add these NCG Masterclasses to its suit of services, which include Security Clearance Sponsorship, support to industry in acquiring DISP accreditation supported by ongoing governance and access to a pool of experts such as strategic consultants through to former nuclear submariners and more. To find out more contact us via **www.adcg.com.au**.









Anchoram is a veteran owned and run firm. It provides a spectrum of data, cyber and insider threat security expertise. Our cross-disciplinary team includes veteran cyber, protective, and personnel security experts. Anchoram's clients include start-ups to multi-national companies and federal agencies across the Space, Defence, and Critical Infrastructure sectors.

Anchoram's DISP Application Support Services include providing advice and assessment of eligibility and suitability including:

- Application management
- Development of any policies, procedures, registers, or processes to support the application
- Security Awareness training delivery to personnel and contractors
- Assurance Audits and quality reviews to identify and address security gaps

We also offer ongoing support to DISP members through Anchoram's Security Officer as a Service (SOaaS) offering.

<u>anchoramconsulting.com.au</u>/disp-support T: 1300 042 833 The manufacturing sector is undergoing digital transformation, digitising processes, adopting the Internet of Things (IoT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies to improve efficiency and reliability. The connectivity of operational technology (OT) to the internet and the convergence between OT and IT have created extreme efficiencies but new vulnerabilities and exposure to cybersecurity threats.

Manufacturing companies are facing a critical need for robust OT cybersecurity programs in today's landscape full of complex threats. The rise of ransomware and sophisticated nation-state attacks has turned manufacturing facilities into prime targets. The proliferation of insecure IoT devices, cloud connections and remote access has significantly increased the avenues for attacks on vital systems, making the need to implement strong OT cybersecurity programs more urgent than ever.

Industrial control systems in manufacturing operations have historically enjoyed a relatively threat-free environment from outside forces. Today, things are different.

Rising cyberattacks on industrial operations show how cybercriminals carefully choose their targets for maximum impact and exploit weaknesses to damage otherwise stable infrastructure - and public wellbeing.

Over the past year, the threat of ransomware attacks has reached alarming levels, with a staggering 50% surge in incidents targeting industrial organisations. What's more concerning is that 70% of these attacks were directed at manufacturing entities. According to leading cybersecurity company Dragos, 21 threat groups are currently fixated on infiltrating industrial organisations, painting a grim picture of the cybersecurity landscape.

Threats to industrial operations have outpaced the capabilities of most OT cybersecurity programs. Most facilities lack the security resources, technologies and cybersecurity management tools to defend operations against ransomware and sophisticated attackers. They also lack the people and expertise to ensure the security of new digital transformation efforts and the expanded use of remote workers. Today's OT security teams face the same security challenges as their IT counterparts and need comparable capabilities. No company can afford to ignore the growing risks of severe cyber incidents.

Manufacturing industry cybersecurity leaders must address cybersecurity needs to lower the risk of damage and downtime and limit risks to the public. Modern, connected factories introduce new vulnerabilities, but there are well-established practices that organisations can use to improve their security postures and reduce exposure to threats.

Based on these findings and aligning with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) cybersecurity framework, NHP and Rockwell Automation's cybersecurity professionals recommend these core steps:

- Performing asset inventories;
- Perform accurate risk and vulnerability assessments to locate the areas of greatest weakness;
- Develop a cybersecurity plan based on assessment results;
- Segment and harden networks with an industrial demilitarised zone and firewalls;
- Implement threat monitoring; and
- Prepare and rehearse incident response plans.

NHP collaborates closely with our partner Rockwell Automation to deliver allinclusive cybersecurity solutions that go beyond network security. Our range of services, hardware and software is certified and aligned with the industry's most robust standards and frameworks, such as ISA/IEC 62443 and the NIST cybersecurity framework. Our solutions can assist you in evaluating, executing and maintaining the security of industrial control systems within operations and enabling transformational technologies that depend on enterprise connectivity.

To find out more, please call NHP on 1300 647 647 or visit **nhp.com.au/cybersecurity** 



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Media

## 4<sup>th</sup> December

Adelaide Convention Centre 6pm to 11pm

JSTRY

workspace

Celebrate the achievements of defence industry and be part of a memorable night as we announce the winners of the three prestigious DTC awards and reveal the recipient of 'The Tony Martin Defence Industry Achievement Award'.

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 Keynote Speaker:
 Tickets:
 Table Options: (10 per table)

 Derrick MCManus
 DTC Members – \$285 Non-Members – \$395
 DTC Member Table – \$2,565 (incl. logo on table)

 Enquiries:
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	CAPABILITIES	Ventia	Vipac Engineers & Scientists	Vocus	Walter Breunig Intelligent Platforms	William Buck Accountants & Advisors	Williams Metal Fabrications	WorkSec - Trusted Workforce
	Robotics			•			_	
	Cyber Security		•					
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	Intelligence, Surveillance & Recon				•			
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	Testing Equipment		•		•			
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	Machine Learning/AI							
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	Construction & Infrastructure	•					•	
	Missiles & Explosives							_
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NU	Through-Life Support							



## CORPORATE PARTNER



## Charities of Choice

Legacy Club of South Australia and Broken Hill Inc Returned Services League of Australia See Differently The Repat Foundation - The Road Home

## Associate Members

Defence Reserves Support SA Edith Cowan University Flinders University Indigenous Defence & Infrastructure Consortium **RMIT University** 

South Australian Space Industry Centre The University of Adelaide University of South Australia University of Western Australia

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## **Nuclear-Powered Submarine Masterclasses**

## **Nuclear Consultancy Group**

Our signature initiative is the Nuclear Consultancy Group designed to accelerate AUKUS by providing expertise to Australia. The NCG is excited to introduce two Masterclasses, with Masterclass 101 covering:

- How a Nuclear-powered submarine operates with nuclear-powered submarine terminology demystified.
- Nuclear-powered submarine operations and obtaining a social licence for them.

Masterclass 102 covering:

- Australia's Nuclear Foundations and the current Global Rules & **Regulations.**
- How to Upskill the Workforce and comply with Nuclear Safety & Security.



#### Security Clearances ADCG

sponsors Australian Government and Defence Security Clearances at Baseline, Negative Vetting 1 (NV1) and Negative Vetting 2 (NV2).



## **Consultancy Services**

ADCG facilitates access sponsored, Security Cleared personnel with an array of relevant experience, knowledge and skills.



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