

Operationalising the Australia-New Zealand Alliance: Anzac 2035 - Closer Defence Relations Statement

17 March 2026

At approximately 4:30am on the 25th of April 1915, the first ANZAC landing at Gallipoli forged a bond unlike any other; changing the Australian and New Zealand relationship forever. Since then, Australians and New Zealanders have served and fought side-by-side with selflessness, courage, perseverance, and mateship, to defend our freedom, our values, and uphold a peaceful world.

This year we celebrate the 75th anniversary of the formal establishment of the Alliance in the 1951 ANZUS Treaty, and reflect on the legacy of 111 years of Anzac history. Our Alliance continues to underpin the defence relationship between New Zealand and Australia. Australia's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Richard Marles and New Zealand's Minister of Defence Judith Collins KC today reaffirm our formal commitments to each other as allies. We share a long history grounded in democratic values, an enduring commitment to multilateralism and international law, and our collective commitment to a peaceful, stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific region.

Anzac 2035 Vision

The Australian and New Zealand Defence Forces are operationalising our Alliance with a vision of being able to operate seamlessly as an increasingly integrated, combat capable Anzac force by 2035, while remaining respectful of our status as two sovereign countries. In the face of a sharply deteriorating security environment, we must be ready to meet the security threats we face today and in the future.

Operationalising our Alliance builds on the significant work to date to strengthen integration. Our two militaries are building deep interoperability and interchangeability, including through common procurement and development of platforms and systems, where it makes sense to do so. We will be force multipliers for each other and combine our military forces in defence of our sovereignty, shared interests, and common values, and territory.

Operationalising our Alliance includes lines of effort across force posture activities, combined operations and exercises, preparedness, defence industry integration, resilience, and Pacific security as ways to protect our sovereignty and uphold regional security.

Line of Effort One – Force Posture Activities

Further enhancing our ability to train and operate from each other's territory strengthens our ability to respond to the threat of conflict and the prospect of coercion. Force posture cooperation enables us to project force to deter actions contrary to the security of our region and respond to crises. Our cooperation to monitor military activities in our region in 2025 demonstrated our ability to work

together in pursuit of shared objectives. Deepening force posture cooperation will bolster our interoperability, our Alliance and collective deterrence.

By 2035, we will:

- Enhance force posture cooperation, including rotational activities in, from, and through our respective geographies, where this is in each countries' national interest; and
- Scope ways to increase Australia and New Zealand's participation in each other's force posture activities and force posture activities of our partners.
- Establish and use an Australia-New Zealand Force Posture Working Group to develop recommendations to advance force posture cooperation.

Line of Effort Two – Combined Operations and Exercises

Australia and New Zealand's combined operations and exercises in the Indo-Pacific are an important contribution to deterring potential threats and promoting a stable, resilient region in which international rules are respected. Increasing the complexity of our combined operations and exercises will mean that by 2035, we will be able to increasingly integrate our forces should the need arise.

By 2035, we will:

- Operate and exercise as a more integrated Anzac force alongside other allies and partners;
- Deploy increasingly integrated and interchangeable units to achieve our *2024 Closer Defence Relations* Shared Defence Objectives;
- Further strengthen combined mission planning, combat readiness, and synchronisation mechanisms, including through the presence of embedded staff in each other's strategic and operational headquarters;
- Exercise and plan for a range of potential crises and contingencies, including through Exercise TALISMAN SABRE; and
- Procure and employ common and complementary capabilities on our exercises and operations, including strike capabilities in a variety of domains, autonomous systems, maritime and air platforms and equipment, and land systems, where it makes sense to do so.

Lines of Effort Three, Four and Five – Force Preparedness, Resilience and Defence Industry Integration

Modern conflicts reinforce the need to be able to sustain military operations over time, and to have the resilience and industrial depth to support those operations. This also means building our collective capabilities and self-reliance within our Alliance construct. Cooperation across preparedness, resilience and defence industry is critical for us to generate and sustain the ability to achieve our *2024 Closer Defence Relations* Shared Defence Objectives, drive cost-effective solutions, build resilience into our respective supply chains, and develop cutting-edge technologies.

By 2035, we will:

- Build understanding of our respective and collective force readiness that underpins our ability to generate military power;
- Foster Australian and New Zealand sovereign capabilities and industries where possible to leverage our respective cutting-edge technology development;
- Reduce barriers to defence industry participation in our respective industries and build connections across our defence industry representative bodies;
- Increase resilience of our sovereign industrial bases and supply chains to increase self-reliance to better support our shared defence needs;
- When it makes sense to do so, explore opportunities to co-develop, co-produce, and co-sustain common capabilities further entrenching our ability to act together in support of shared interests;
- Leverage Australian and New Zealand sovereign capability and sustainment services to increase shared logistics and sustainment (eg C-130J and P-8A), which provide redundancy for our respective defence forces; and
- Optimise collective training, education, exchanges and attachments to focus on common operating platforms.

Line of Effort Six – Pacific Security

New Zealand and Australia are Pacific nations. Our security is inextricably linked with the security of the broader Pacific region. Recognising our shared geography and the importance of our defence relationships with our Pacific partners, we will continue to support combined operations and exercises in the Pacific. We will work through the region's security architecture to continue delivering Pacific-led solutions to regional security challenges and enhance our collective capabilities.

By 2035, we will:

- Increase Pacific defence force interoperability across a range of military tasks, with a focus on embedding the Pacific Response Group as a regional asset that enables more effective co-deployments in times of need, such as disaster response situations;
- Expand our combined operations and activities in the Pacific to address regional security concerns;
- Increasingly work through the South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting (SPDMM) to meet defence needs of the Pacific in accordance with Pacific aspirations and the Blue Pacific Ocean of Peace; and
- Increase our support to Pacific-led combined maritime activities to uphold and bolster regional maritime security.

Implementation and Monitoring

This statement on *Operationalising the Alliance*, our *2024 Joint Statement on Closer Defence Relations*, and our defence dialogue architecture provide the policy framework to regularly review, update and adapt our Alliance. Subordinate working groups will take forward practical implementation initiatives against each of the lines of effort above. ANZMIN will remain the primary vehicle for managing our Alliance.

Signed in Canberra, Australia on 17 March 2026.