



**Briefing to the Minister of Defence**

**AUKUS PILLAR TWO: OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW ZEALAND'S RESEARCH  
COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY**

MoD ref: *122-2023*

<b>Type of briefing:</b>	Noting	<b>For action by:</b>	1 September 2023
<b>For referral to:</b>	Minister of Research, Science and Innovation	<b>For information.</b>	
<b>For referral to:</b>	Minister of Foreign Affairs	<b>For information.</b>	

<b>Purpose:</b>	This briefing provides initial analysis on opportunities for New Zealand's research community and industry that may arise from Pillar Two of the AUKUS partnership. This briefing responds to a request from the Minister of Research, Science and Innovation via the National Assessments Bureau.
<b>Consulted with:</b>	New Zealand Defence Force; Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

**ANDREW BRIDGMAN**  
Secretary of Defence  
Date: *23 August 2023*

cc: **KR SHORT**  
Air Marshal  
Chief of Defence Force

<b>MOD contact:</b>	s9(2)(g)(i) – Principal Analyst, Policy Branch	<b>Ph:</b>	s9(2)(a)	<b>A/H:</b>	s9(2)(a)
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## Key Points

- The AUKUS arrangement is a trilateral advanced military technology partnership between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- The initial focus of AUKUS, referred to as Pillar One, is to deliver a conventionally armed nuclear-powered submarine capability to Australia.
- AUKUS Pillar Two concerns the development of a range of advanced non-nuclear military technologies, with the objective of gaining and harnessing the strategic advantages of these transformational technologies. Work under this Pillar currently covers eight areas: undersea capabilities; quantum technologies; artificial intelligence and autonomy; advanced cyber; hypersonic and counter-hypersonic capabilities; electronic warfare; innovation; and information sharing.
- The AUKUS partners have [redacted] s6(b)(i) [redacted] They have also undertaken work with their respective research and industry communities.
- New Zealand Ministers and officials have confirmed with the AUKUS partners (and publicly) that New Zealand is interested in exploring what AUKUS Pillar Two might offer or mean, on a no commitments basis. Any New Zealand involvement in Pillar Two may present opportunities for New Zealand's research and industry communities.
- [redacted] s6(a) [redacted]
- As with other areas of AUKUS Pillar Two, details on how researchers and industry may engage with any AUKUS projects will become clearer as the AUKUS Pillar Two structures and working arrangements mature.
- [redacted] s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i) [redacted]
- Officials are available to provide additional briefings.

### Recommended actions:

- a) **Note** opportunities for New Zealand's research community and industry under AUKUS Pillar Two remain uncertain.  Yes / No
- b) **Note** officials are continuing to analyse opportunities for New Zealand under AUKUS Pillar Two.  Yes / No
- c) **Refer** this briefing to the Minister of Research, Science and Innovation and the Minister of Foreign Affairs for their information.  Yes / No

*Andrew Little*

MINISTER OF DEFENCE

Date: 29/9/23

## AUKUS: Strategic cooperation on advanced technologies

1. Announced in September 2021, the AUKUS arrangement between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States is a military and security technology partnership focused on advanced capabilities. [REDACTED] s6(a)
2. The AUKUS partnership has two focused lines of effort:
  - a. Pillar One: delivering a conventionally armed nuclear-powered submarine capability to Australia; and
  - b. Pillar Two: accelerating the joint development and application of non-nuclear advanced military capabilities.
3. Pillar Two currently consists of eight key areas: undersea capabilities; quantum technologies; artificial intelligence (AI) and autonomy; advanced cyber; hypersonic and counter-hypersonic capabilities; electronic warfare; innovation; and information sharing. The AUKUS partners are increasingly focused on advancing Pillar Two, establishing working groups for the capability areas and holding a trial of AI-enhanced drone systems.

## New Zealand engagement on Pillar Two

4. With the next steps for Pillar One now confirmed,<sup>1</sup> [REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(i)
5. New Zealand has confirmed with the AUKUS partners (and publicly) that we are interested in exploring what AUKUS Pillar Two might offer or mean for us, on a no-commitments basis [REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(i)
6. [REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(i)  
[REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)

## Opportunities for New Zealand's research community and industry

7. [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)  
[REDACTED] AUKUS partners have already drawn on their research and industry communities: the press release for the inaugural AUKUS

<sup>1</sup> See AUKUS Leaders' announcement of 14 March 2023.

AI and Autonomy trial held in April 2023<sup>2</sup> listed four industry participants: Blue Bear and Frazer-Nash Consultancy (UK) as well as Boeing and Insitu (Australia).

8.

s9(2)(g)(i)

9.

10.

a.

s6(a)

b.

s6(a)

c.

s6(a)

11.

s6(a)

12.

<sup>2</sup> For further information, see UK Press Release *World first as UK hosts inaugural AUKUS AI and Autonomy trial*.

13.

s9(2)(g)(i)

s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)



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s6(a)