

Industry Handbook

BAE Systems Australia: Navigating Defence

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A message from our Industry Capability team

31 August 2026

On behalf of BAE Systems Australia, we'd like to present our first Navigating Defence: Industry Handbook.

This handbook has been developed alongside BAE Systems Australia's Navigating Defence Series training and education program to support the development of Australia's defence industry. It is intended to be a resource for leaders of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) who are beginning their defence industry journey and would like to understand what is required, and what supports are available. We know that the Australian Defence sector presents a unique, yet challenging, opportunity for businesses of all sizes to thrive.

Navigating the complexities of supplying can be daunting for small businesses, particularly those unfamiliar with

the requirements, regulations and restrictions that are unique to the industry. Businesses often need to contend with complex and lengthy procurement processes, strict regulatory compliance, certification and security clearance requirements, and export controls, which create high barriers to entry and can make it difficult for businesses to break into the sector. However, securing defence work can present long-term and far-reaching benefits for businesses, providing sizeable, multi-year revenue streams, enhanced business reputation in non-defence sectors, and opportunities to supply and operate in new international markets.

Whether your business is offering products, services, platforms or technical expertise, this handbook provides practical insights and advice to help position your business



for success. From understanding security requirements and procurement practices, to where to go for support and export advice, it is tailored to help you overcome challenges and grow your defence business.

Specifically, this handbook provides useful information about:

- understanding the Defence policy landscape
- meeting defence industry supplier requirements, including security, quality, pricing and estimating, and sustainability obligations
- creating diverse and inclusive workplaces, including engaging with First Nations people and veterans
- completing business development activities
- accessing defence industry support programs, advocacy and resources
- understanding the defence industry's research and development (R&D) landscape
- achieving export success.

It is important to note that this handbook details a wide range of support and references available to businesses embarking on their defence journey, however it is not exhaustive and should be used as a reference guide only. Implementation and utility should be approached incrementally and prioritised in accordance with your defence market engagement strategy. In addition to the resources shared in this handbook, there are many defence-specific advisers available to support your business development approach. For further information, please contact BAE Systems Australia's Industry Capability Team.

BAE Systems Australia is committed to supporting the continued growth and development of our defence industrial base. It is absolutely critical that we have a strong, innovative and resilient sector that can underpin the capability required to keep our nation safe.

We wish you every success on your defence industry journey.



Jeremy Satchell
Head of Industry Capability
BAE Systems Australia



Ellie Hughes
Industry Development Manager
BAE Systems Australia

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1. Understanding the Defence Policy Landscape

The Australian Government has released a range of defence policies, strategies, plans and reviews that shape Australia's defence procurement and funding priorities. Understanding these documents and the priorities contained within, enables local industry to anticipate future requirements and invest in the activities and technology needed to support Defence's evolving capability requirements.

Understanding the documents detailed below is fundamental to the success of your business strategy.

Defence Strategic Review

Released in April 2023, the Defence Strategic Review outlines the Australian Government's planned reforms to Australia's national defence posture and structure. That is, a military strategy of denial centred on anti-access/area-denial capabilities and a pivot away from Australia's traditional balanced force model.

The Review's recommendations included: enhancement of long-range precision strike capabilities, acquisition of nuclear-powered submarines, and the reinforcement of Australia's northern bases.

For more information visit: [National Defence: Defence Strategic Review 2023](#).

Surface Fleet Review

Undertaken in response to the 2023 Defence Strategic Review, the Surface Fleet Review independently analysed the current and future capability requirements of the Royal Australian Navy to meet current strategic circumstances. It recommended expanding the Royal Australian Navy's surface fleet to counter regional threats and enhance Australia's maritime security.

For more information, visit: [Independent Analysis into Navy's Surface Combatant Fleet](#).

Defence Industry Development Strategy

Released in 2026, the Defence Industry Development Strategy (DIDS) 2026 sets the direction for strengthening Australia's sovereign defence industrial base by outlining the government's priorities for

building a resilient, innovative and skilled defence industry. The Strategy provides the policy framework and initiatives needed to enhance sovereign capability, grow the defence workforce, accelerate innovation and ensure industry is positioned to deliver and sustain Defence capability now and into the future.

For more information, visit: [Defence Industry Development Strategy](#).

National Defence Strategy

The 2026 National Defence Strategy (NDS) outlines the Australian Government's approach to addressing Australia's evolving strategic and security challenges, in an unpredictable global environment. The Strategy reinforces the development of an integrated, focused and technologically advanced Australian Defence Force capable of delivering credible deterrence by denial, enhanced self-reliance and resilience and long-range military effects in support of Australia's national interests.

For more information, visit: [2026 National Defence Strategy](#)

Integrated Investment Program

Released alongside the 2026 National Defence Strategy, the Integrated Investment Program (IIP) 2026 details the capability acquisitions, upgrades and enabling investments required to deliver the Government's defence objectives. The IIP allocated around \$425 billion over a decade to fund ADF priorities, including conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines, long-range strike weapons, uncrewed drones, and localised air defence systems.

For more information, visit: [2026 Integrated Investment Program](#).

2024 Naval Shipbuilding and Sustainment Plan

Launched in December 2024, the Naval Shipbuilding and Sustainment Plan outlines the Australian Government's 30-year vision for continuous naval shipbuilding and sustainment and provides details of the \$159 billion investment contained in the Integrated Investment Program.

For more information, visit [2024 Naval Shipbuilding and Sustainment Plan](#).

Defence Innovation, Science and Technology Strategy

The Defence Innovation, Science and Technology (IS&T) Strategy, '*Accelerating Asymmetric Advantage – delivering More, Together*', seeks to align research and development efforts with Australia's national defence priorities. This secures the Australian Defence Force's technological advancement and preparedness for future challenges.

For more information, visit: [Strategies, Defence Science and Technology Group](#).

Defence Digital Engineering Strategy

The Defence Digital Engineering Strategy outlines Australia's approach to integrating digital engineering into defence systems and processes, enhancing the design, development and sustainment of defence capabilities. Using digital tools and techniques, the strategy provides a pathway to improve efficiency, agility and collaboration across defence operations.

For more information, visit: [Digital Engineering Strategy 2024](#).

Defence Export Strategy

The Defence Export Strategy, launched in 2018, aimed to boost Australia's defence export success over the following decade by strengthening a more sustainable and competitive national defence supply chain. The strategy allocated an additional \$20 million in funding from 2018 to 2028 to support the Australian Defence Force and position Australia among the world's top 10 defence exporters.

For more information, visit: [Defence Export Strategy](#).

Defence Industry Skilling and STEM Strategy

The Defence Industry Skilling and STEM Strategy was established in 2019. It outlines how the Australian Government will support the defence industry in meeting workforce skill requirements, and comprises four key focus areas: Engage, Attract, Train and Retain, Collaborate.

For more information, visit: [Defence Industry Skilling and STEM Strategy](#).

The Australian Guided Weapons and Explosive Ordnance (GWEO) Plan

Australia's GWEO Plan is a comprehensive, long-term strategy to build sovereign capability in missile and munitions systems to bolster deterrence, resilience, and self-reliance in a more contested strategic environment. The plan commits A\$16–21 billion over the coming decade toward improving stockpiles, acquiring long-range strike systems, and establishing domestic manufacturing in Australia. To achieve this, the GWEO Plan emphasises phased industrial development, workforce and R&D capacity building, close collaboration with trusted allies, streamlined export-control arrangements, and governance with metrics and accountability to guide progress.

For more information, visit: [The Australian Guided Weapons and Explosive Ordnance Plan](#).

Australia's AUKUS Submarine Industry Strategy

The AUKUS Submarine Industry Strategy outlines the Australian Government's long-term plan to develop the sovereign capability required to deliver, operate, and maintain conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarines, while supporting the Collins-class fleet. It focuses on transforming shipbuilding infrastructure, developing a skilled workforce, simplifying regulation, and integrating local industry into U.S. and U.K. supply chains. The strategy is structured around five key efforts: demand clarity, investment attraction, regulatory reform, workforce growth, and global supply chain integration.

For more information, visit: [Australia's AUKUS Submarine Industry Strategy](#).

2. Meeting Defence Industry Supplier Requirements

As a defence industry supplier, it's important you are aware of and work towards achieving the expected, security, quality, estimating and pricing, and sustainability requirements.

Security requirements

Businesses operating in the defence sector will often have access to sensitive information that can make them a target for cyber or other supply chain attacks. Without adequate protections in place, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are vulnerable to bad actors and nation states that are looking for easy access to national security-relevant information held by government, defence and larger enterprises.

The Defence Industry Security Program (DISP) sets out the expected security requirements and guidelines for Australian businesses undertaking Defence work. The DISP assessment process is the security vetting protocol for Australian businesses in the defence industry supply chain.

The DISP helps businesses to:

- develop and maintain their security policy responsibilities
- establish good governance, systems and practices to mitigate risks identified within the business
- protect sensitive information and assets within the defence industry supply chain.

Businesses are assessed against the following areas: governance, personnel security, physical security, information and cyber security.

For more information, visit: [Defence Industry Security Program](#).

Who can apply for DISP membership?

DISP membership is open to any Australian business seeking to participate in the defence industry supply chain.

DISP membership is sometimes mandated, depending on the type and classification of work undertaken by the defence industry through contractual requirements. While not always mandated, it is highly recommended for businesses

currently working on Defence projects, or for those seeking to partner with Defence Primes.

Why is DISP membership important...

...for Defence and other government entities?

DISP membership provides confidence and assurance when procuring goods and services from supply chain businesses.

Defence requires its suppliers to hold an appropriate level of DISP membership when they are:

- working on sensitive or classified information or assets
- storing or transporting Defence weapons or explosive ordnance
- providing security solutions for Defence installations and infrastructure
- as a result of a Defence business requirement or contract.

...for suppliers to Defence and other prime or Tier 1 contractors?

DISP membership provides a way for defence industry partners to work effectively and comply with the Australian Government's Defence Industry Security Program Policy. Some contracts may require the supplier to obtain DISP membership before any Defence information or product specifications are provided.

DISP also offers substantial benefits to industry, in terms of current and future business opportunities. Proactive suppliers choosing to join the defence industry supply chain should therefore initiate engagement with the DISP process at the earliest opportunity.

DISP membership levels align to security classification

DISP membership levels align to security classifications as follows:

- OFFICIAL-DISP- no membership required
- OFFICIAL: Sensitive-DISP 'Entry Level'
- PROTECTED-DISP 'Level 1'
- SECRET-DISP 'Level 2'
- TOP SECRET-DISP 'Level 3'.



For more information on the DISP and to understand Australian Government supplier requirements, visit: [Defence Industry Security Program – Eligibility & Suitability](#).

Revised DISP Cyber Requirements

Businesses seeking DISP membership will now be required to comply with the Australian Signals Directorate [Essential Eight \(at Maturity Level 2\)](#).

This is to ensure that organisations involved in the supply, storage or maintenance of defence-related information maintain a standard level of cyber security protections to manage cyber risks.

Businesses applying for DISP membership will be assessed on their organisation's ICT infrastructure and cyber security protections and will need to complete an Essential Eight Cyber Security Questionnaire.

For guidance on the Essential Eight visit: [Essential Eight Assessment Process Guide | Cyber.gov.au](#).

There are several resources available to businesses commencing this process through [the Australian Cyber Security Centre](#) and the Office of Defence Industry Support. Grants are also available to support cyber uplift activities through the Australian Government and some State Governments.

Cyber Framework for Defence Industry (CFDI)

Developed by BAE Systems Australia and Saab Australia, in collaboration with industry partners and the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC), the CFDI is a risk management tool available for free to defence industry businesses. It allows SMEs to self-assess their cyber maturity against a

standardised approach and provides guidance on how to improve their cyber maturity.

Note, the CFDI is not a replacement for DISP, nor is it a certification.

To access the CFDI tool, visit: [CFDI Cyber Security Questionnaire](#).

Quality Requirements

The success of defence industry projects is inherently tied to the strength and quality of the supply chain. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are vital to success. By understanding and practicing relevant supplier quality assurance (SQA) procedures, your business contributes to a strong, reliable, and effective partnership with your defence industry customers.

SQA is an essential function within many businesses including defence industry prime contractors (primes). It ensures suppliers consistently provide high-quality products and services, contributing to a reliable and resilient supply chain.

The SQA process also ensures customer needs are met and products meet or exceed the required quality standards. SQA considers the following:

- **Quality:** Characteristics of a product that enable it to satisfy needs
- **Control:** Measurement of quality performance vs requirement, and containment of deviations
- **Assurance:** Actions necessary to gain confidence that a product shall satisfy its quality requirements.

How BAE Systems Australia maintains Supplier Quality Assurance

BAE Systems Australia maintains SQA through several key practices, including:

- Collaboration and partnerships: working closely with suppliers to foster mutual understanding and shared goals.
- Open and honest relationships: ensuring transparency and trust in all interactions.
- Two-way communication: maintaining clear and continuous dialogue between BAE Systems Australia and its suppliers.
- Monitoring: completing regular audits or assessments to ensure compliance with quality standards, regulations, and contractual requirements.
- Support & development: providing guidance to suppliers to improve quality and processes, and where suitable, deployment of targeted development activities.

Audits and assessments are regularly conducted as part of the SQA process so that suppliers meet both BAE Systems Australia and customer quality expectations.

Audits are risk-based and are performed in accordance with ISO 19011. They typically focus on verifying compliance with specific standards, regulations, or processes. These may include:

- Quality / process audits: conducted for new suppliers, suppliers with a changed or unproven quality record, or for certification assessments and follow-ups.
- Product process audits: focused on new capabilities or processes, including those required by MIL-STD and BAE Systems Australia-specific 'R Spec' standards.

Assessments are typically performed to evaluate supplier capability, identify strengths and weaknesses, and ensure that quality systems are effective. They may be triggered by:

- Initiation of new projects with existing or new suppliers
- Feedback from purchasing or project teams
- Quality issues, such as non-conformance reports or performance trends from received goods.

Both audits and assessments result in a final report, which is issued along with Supplier Corrective Action Reports (SCARs), where necessary. Outcomes from these activities are recorded and used to inform future actions.

In the future, BAE Systems Australia will deploy additional tools to enhance supplier collaboration and quality monitoring, including:

- Supplier Development Framework: A program designed to help mature and improve the capabilities of our supply chain.
- Digital Collaboration Tool (iValua): A platform that will allow suppliers to integrate reporting directly into the BAE Systems Australia, streamlining communication and performance monitoring.

By working collaboratively with our suppliers and maintaining rigorous quality assurance processes, we can all meet the needs of our customers and continue to deliver high-quality products and services.

Understand and manage your sub-tier supply chain

As a supplier, it is crucial to understand and manage your sub-tier supply chain—the suppliers you rely on to meet your deliverables. Your capability is viewed not only on your direct performance but also your ability to monitor and manage your sub-tier suppliers effectively.

Your customers will likely track various metrics such that suppliers meet high standards of quality. Key monitoring areas include:

- Quality of parts vs requirements: ensuring that parts meet specifications through inbound inspections and a 'right first time' approach.
- Non-conformances and corrective actions: tracking defects and ensuring appropriate corrective actions are taken.
- Responsiveness: evaluating how suppliers respond to actions, containment measures and corrective actions
- Resilience: the steps you have taken to reduce the likelihood of interruption of supply to your customer
- On-time delivery: ensuring you regularly monitor and communicate with your suppliers to proactively identify and mitigate possible delays to delivery schedule.

Estimating and Pricing

As part of the Customers Tender Evaluation process, the customer is seeking confidence that the supplier can provide the goods or services promised within their proposal. Historically, some suppliers overstate the performance of the equipment or their ability to achieve the delivery schedule, or to deliver the goods or services at a price that does not provide a sustainable margin, in order to win the tender.

When evaluating the causes of significant budget and cost overruns in a project, it's important to consider whether poor management or inaccurate initial estimates, or other factors were to blame. It is often a combination of all of these. However, when analysing why a project is successful, the key factors typically include a well-defined and well-understood scope and appropriate resourcing, both in terms of labour and costs to deliver it.

These fundamental elements of a successful project are grounded in a robust basis of estimates (BoE), which provides the customer with the confidence that the supplier knows what they are doing and have priced the proposal appropriately to deliver it. The customer is seeking value for money, and the best method to demonstrate that value for money is through the basis of estimate, where the rationale as to why things cost what they cost is clearly explained. Ideally the estimates are underpinned with credible or historic data, as opposed to subject matter expert options, which are typically classified as 'unsubstantiated cost estimate'. This underscores the critical role of estimating and pricing activity in the tendering process.

As a supplier, your estimating team is responsible for ensuring your cost estimates for selected design solutions are accurate, reflect the true cost of implementation, demonstrate value, and comply with both internal and external customer governance requirements. The estimating team needs to provide assurance that the prices submitted to customers are credible, comprehensive and compliant to the Cost Principles.

A cost estimate should be an objective, unbiased assessment or forecast of the cost (or range of costs) associated with a specific task or activity. This estimate is based on the most relevant, accurate, and up-to-date cost and program information available at the time, and accounts for any agreed dependencies, assumptions, risks, exclusions, and opportunities (DAREO). In simple terms, a cost estimate represents your best judgment of the cost for a given task, based on the information available at that moment.

Prepare a DAREO

Throughout the bidding process, preparation of a DAREO spreadsheet plays a crucial role in ensuring all relevant aspects of work scope are considered. DAREO components are defined as follows:

- **Dependency:** When the output from one project is required as a mandatory input for another.
- **Assumption:** A condition or fact that is assumed to be true in order to proceed with the project.
- **Risk:** An event or circumstance that may occur with a potential negative impact on the project.
- **Exclusion:** Specific work or costs that are deliberately not included in the scope or estimate.
- **Opportunity:** An event or circumstance that may arise with a positive impact on the project.

A simple example of a DAREO is shown below:

WBS	Dependency	Assumption	Risk	Exclusion	Opportunity
01 (Proposal Level)	Costs are dependent on contract being placed by...	The Customer will provide the following Government Furnished Equipment...	There is a Risk that... caused by... resulting in...	Our price excludes delivery to the customer	If contracted for larger quantities, larger batch sizes can reduce set up costs.
01.01 (Estimate Level)	Engineering effort is dependent on the production ready design	The assumption is that the Customer Acceptance testing passes first time	There is a risk that the final product is unacceptable, caused by failing Customer acceptance testing resulting in additional rework being required and delays to the program	The cost of tools and test equipment has been excluded from this estimate	Purchase of new manufacturing equipment will reduce the manufacturing time
01.02.03 (Estimate Level)	Warehouse facilities are available to store components	No environment-controlled warehouse is required	There is a risk that additional warehousing will be required, caused by other work occupying the space, resulting in additional warehousing costs	Additional warehousing costs	Adopting a Just in Time (JIT) approach would limit warehouse footprint

Adhere to Defence-related standards

In the context of government contracts, there are numerous regulations governing the use of public funds. To ensure compliance with these regulations, adhere to the following Defence-related standards:

- ASDEFCON, DEFCON, and Defence Federal Acquisition Regulations
- CASG Cost Principles
- Profit Principles, where applicable for single-source contracts over \$2 million.

All submissions are subject to various price investigations, including:

- Commercial and Financial Analysis (CFA)
- Cost Assurance & Analysis Service (CAAS)
- Defence Contract Audit Agency (DCAA).

Important takeaways for SMEs regarding cost principles are to:

- have data that substantiates your estimate
- be transparent - don't hide costs
- recover your overheads and Non-Recurring Engineering (NRE) – do not aim to over-recover
- ensure overheads, risk and profit are reasonable, and in accordance with the allowable rates
- understand your cost structure and be consistent
- steer away from combined labour rates
- provide accurate and realistic costs.

Attend a BAE Systems Australia *Estimating for Defence Training*

For businesses seeking to enhance their estimating and pricing acumen, BAE Systems Australia holds several 2-day *Estimating for Defence* training courses each year. They were developed by the BAE Systems Australia Estimating and Pricing team and are delivered in partnership with the Global Access Program. The training courses are:

- designed to improve participants' understanding and application of pricing and estimating principles for defence contracts and customers
- include practical exercises to reinforce the knowledge gained.

To find out more details and to register visit the [BAE Systems ICN Supplier Portal](#).

Sustainability Requirements

The United Nations defines sustainability as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

Sustainability is integral to business performance, and this includes addressing environment, social and governance (ESG) responsibilities. ESG ratings measure an organisation's environmental and social impact and its governance effectiveness in managing these areas. The importance of ESG strategy within organisations is growing, with institutional investors increasingly expecting strong commitments to ESG criteria.

How BAE Systems Australia addresses sustainability

BAE Systems' Global ESG Strategy focuses on driving sustainability ambitions to deliver business priorities.

Activities are aligned to three main pillars:

1. Building climate resilience and adaptation
2. Creating opportunity for people and communities
3. Maintaining rigorous standards of governance and assurance.

Figure 1 summarises the strategy.

We recognise our value chain contributes significantly to our environmental footprint and climate resilience, social contributions and responsibility, and governance activities.

Figure 2 shows how we align our supply chain ESG ambitions to these pillars.

To ensure a resilient supply chain, we collaborate and partner with our suppliers. This delivers capability that our customers need and supports our supply chain to address challenges, including the supply of products and services to us.

For more information about BAE Systems Australia's sustainability commitment, visit: [Sustainability, BAE Systems](#).

For questions about our supply chain sustainability strategy, please email Kiri Bartlett, Supply Chain Sustainability Manager, at: kiri.bartlett@baesystems.au.

Supplier requirements – Environment

BAE Systems Australia is working towards achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions across our value chain by 2050. We therefore encourage our suppliers to measure, manage, and, wherever practicable, reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, and comply with applicable laws and regulations regarding the environment.

We developed a simplified ESG tracker template to support suppliers in starting their ESG tracking and reporting activities.

Figure 1: BAE Systems' Global Strategy is based on three pillars aligned to business priorities.



Figure 2: Partnering and working sustainably and responsibly with suppliers.



For a copy of the tracker template, email Kiri Bartlett, Supply Chain Sustainability Manager, at: kiri.bartlett@baesystems.au.

Supplier requirements – Social

We work with suppliers to:

- champion ethical practices and encourage diversity within our supply chain
- make positive social and economic contributions in the communities and regions where we live and work.

It is mandatory that our suppliers acknowledge our supplier Code of Conduct. For more information, visit: [Supplier Code of Conduct](#).

Supplier requirements – Governance

Success within the defence industry depends on stakeholder trust that our suppliers will uphold high standards of governance and business conduct. BAE Systems Australia aims to, and expects suppliers to be compliant with regulations, transparent about activities and to measure progress.

3. Creating Diverse and Inclusive Workplaces

Embracing diversity is not only the right thing to do; it makes good business sense. A diverse and inclusive workplace encourages your employees to embrace difference, brings people together from all walks of life, facilitates creativity and helps ensure your business continues to develop innovative solutions for your customers.

First Nations Engagement

Businesses supplying into Australia's defence industry sector often need to consider how they will engage and support First Nations participation in their supply chains. For example:

- as part of an Australian Industry Capability (AIC) Plan and/or subcontractor AIC Plan
- as part of your supplier onboarding journey with a prime or Tier 1 contractor such as BAE Systems Australia, outline the measures you have in place or plan to take to maximise First Nations participation in your business.

In 2016, BAE Systems Australia launched its inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), becoming the first Australian defence industry company to document its commitment to supporting First Nations employees, businesses and communities.

Since then, BAE Systems Australia has been working to increase meaningful engagement with First Nations communities and establish strong relationships with First Nations businesses.

As an extension of the RAP, BAE Systems Australia has implemented an enterprise-wide First Nations Supply Chain Strategy to specifically drive supply chain outcomes for First Nations businesses.

For more information about our RAP, visit: [BAE Systems | Reconciliation Action Plan](#).

As a supplier, consider taking the following actions:

- review the available policy guidance
- review the Commonwealth of Australia's Indigenous Procurement Policy
- develop and implement a Reconciliation Action Plan
- engage more First Nations-owned businesses in your supply chain
- recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees
- partner with your local Indigenous Chamber of Commerce or Supply Nation to identify local capability
- undertake community investment activities
- update your procurement policies to reduce the barriers to entry for Indigenous businesses – for example, increase sole sourcing thresholds or introduce favourable payment terms.

Figure 3: BAE Systems Australia RAP artwork by Elizabeth Yanyi Close, a Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara artist based in Adelaide.





Veterans Engagement

Similar to First Nations engagement, engagement with Australian Defence Force veterans is a critical part of operating in the defence sector. If you are in the business of supplying capability to Defence directly or in partnership with BAE Systems Australia, you may also wish to consider how your business can support the community in which you work.

Veterans can bring a wealth of knowledge, skills and military experience to your business and are uniquely placed to help you understand customer requirements and the needs of the defence industry.

Businesses supplying into defence industry will often be required to outline their approach to veteran engagement within their business, including any veteran-owned businesses in their supply chains. This is likely to occur as part of the development of an AIC Plan or subcontractor AIC Plan, and during the supplier onboarding process for a prime or Tier 1 contractor.

Consider how you can become an employer of choice for your community, implementing policies and/or initiatives in your business that support veterans and their families.

As a supplier, consider taking the following actions:

- establish a Veterans Advisory Committee to provide advice on how to attract, recruit, transition and retain the best veteran talent
- implement business policies and structures that support reservist leave and pay arrangements, flexible workplace agreements, and, health and wellbeing leave

- ensure your HR and onboarding procedures create meaningful pathways for veteran employment
- create a supportive workplace culture with a mentor network for new starters
- partner with organisations such as SoldierOn, Legacy, RSL employment program, Helping Heroes
- establish employee reference groups
- commemorate and celebrate your veteran community
- set up volunteering opportunities for your staff that support the veteran community.

For more information, visit: [Home | Veteran Employment Program](#)

[Home - ADF Reserves and Employer Support](#)

[Member Directory - Find Members - Veteran Community Business Chamber.](#)

BAE Systems Australia has prepared a *Best Practice Guide for Employing Veterans* for businesses wanting to learn more about how to engage and support veterans within their own organisations, available at: [BAE Systems launches Veterans Employment Best Practice Guide | BAE Systems.](#)

4. Completing Business Development Activities

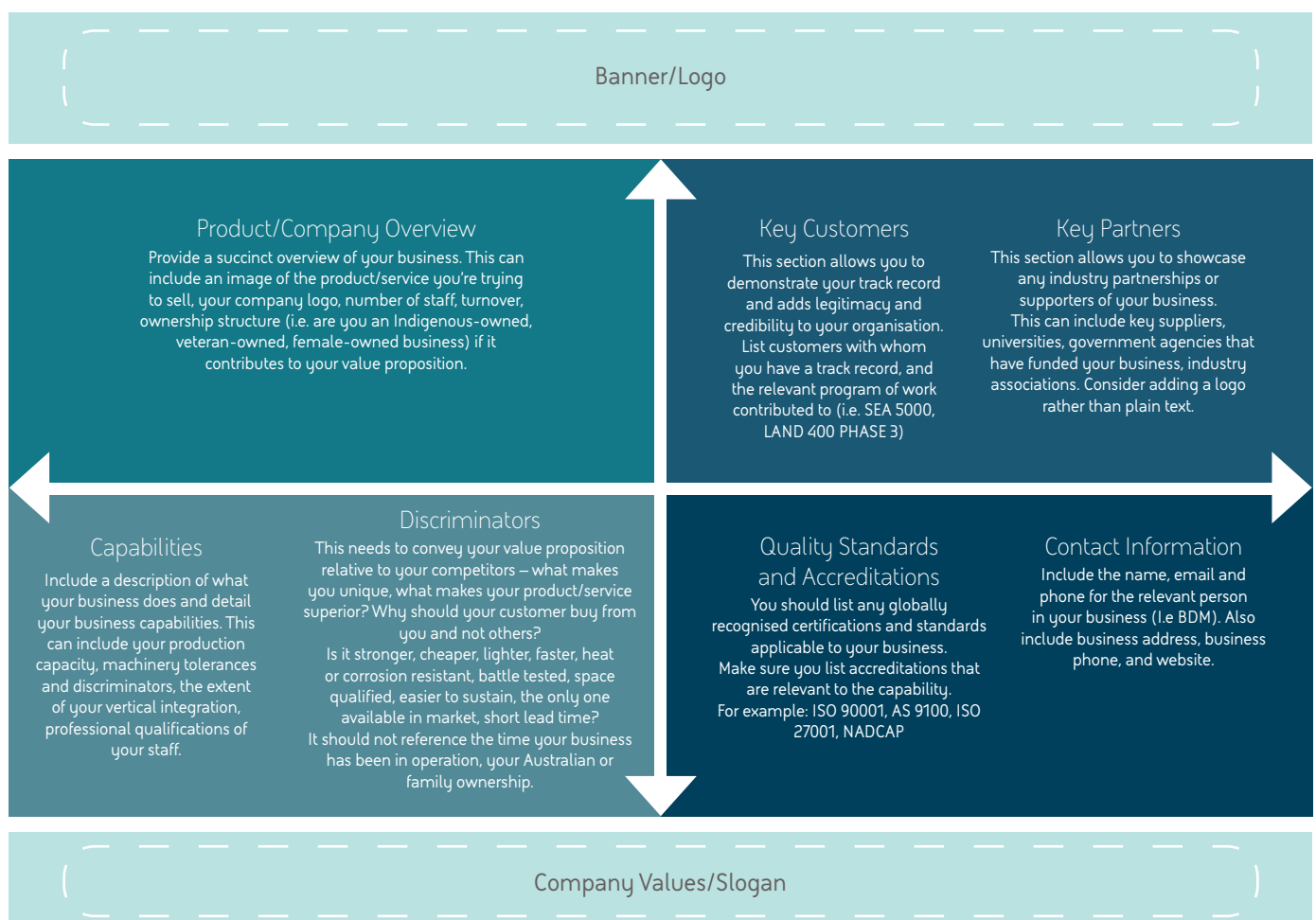
There are several activities that businesses and business development managers should undertake when starting their defence industry journey, as described in this section. These are crucial to improve your understanding of the defence environment and for making strong and lasting connections to help your business grow.

Develop a QUAD Chart

QUAD charts are an important and standard tool for defence industry suppliers to communicate key information about their capabilities to prospective customers. The Office of Defence Industry Support, State and Territory Governments and some defence industry associations are available to support the development and provide feedback on your business' QUAD chart.

Figure 4 shows a sample QUAD chart template. QUAD charts typically follow a 4-part structure. Feel free to take a level of creative licence when designing your QUAD chart. You don't need to stick to the 4-part structure if you feel you can come up with a more visually appealing layout that covers off all relevant and required information.

Figure 4: QUAD chart template – communicates key information about your business' capabilities.



An effective QUAD chart:

- is clear and concise
- includes visuals
- demonstrates alignment with Sovereign Defence Industrial Priorities (SDIPs)
- highlights the uniqueness of your discriminators
- is updated regularly and tailored for each customer.

Clarity and conciseness

A QUAD chart should be clear and concise, delivering impactful information. Use bullet points, minimal text, and visuals to get your message across. Avoid jargon and overly technical language unless it's appropriate for the audience.

Use both sides of the page. Some options for the alternate side of your QUAD chart include:

- a case study on one of the successful projects delivered by your business
- visuals of your product or solution
- concept of operations (CONOPS) diagram
- customer references or testimonials.

Visuals

Consider using images, diagrams, logos to make your QUAD chart more visually engaging. Visuals attract a reader's attention, so make them simple and use them to convey your key messages and claims about your product, service or solution.

Align with Sovereign Defence Industrial Priorities (SDIPs)

Ensure your QUAD chart demonstrates how your capability addresses or aligns with the 7 SDIPs outlined in the Australian Government's Defence Industry Development Strategy:

1. Maintenance, repair, overhaul and upgrade (MRO&U) of Australian Defence Force aircraft
2. Continuous naval shipbuilding and sustainment
3. Sustainment and enhancement of the combined-arms land system
4. Domestic manufacture of guided weapons, explosive ordnance and munitions
5. Development and integration of autonomous systems
6. Integration and enhancement of battlespace awareness and management systems
7. Test and evaluation, certification and systems assurance.

These priorities signal the direction of Defence's demand, including shortfalls or expected areas of growth. If your capability addresses specific areas of Defence need, then highlight this in your QUAD chart.

Highlight the uniqueness of your discriminators

Focus on what makes your solution different and superior to existing technologies on the market and your competitors. This could be lower cost, faster deployment, product innovation, material strength, shorter lead times, light weighting, temperature resistance or other factors.

Discriminators **are not** how long your business has been in operation, your business' SME status, ISO9001 certification or Australian ownership.

Update regularly and tailor for each customer

QUAD charts are like cover letters, so:

- tailor them to your specific audience
- update them regularly so they convey the current status of the projects you are working on, any milestones completed and changes in the competitive, policy or market landscape.

If your business supplies across multiple defence domains, that is, land, maritime, aerospace and/or cyber, then create versions of your QUAD chart that reflect the priorities and capability needs in each of these domains – update images, customers and partners, and ensure your capabilities and discriminators reflect your relevant strengths in that domain.

Network

Networking is a critical business development activity with far-reaching benefits for organisations seeking to supply into the defence sector. Attending defence networking events allows you to promote your unique capability, understand your position in the market or defence supply chain, connect with potential customers or industry partners, collect market intelligence and identify new opportunities to enhance or develop your current product offering.

There are a number of businesses and associations that run networking events for their memberships to connect with potential customer and policy makers. For more information, go to [Industry Advocacy & Resources](#).

Defence Industry Networking (DIN) is a not-for-profit organisation that runs **free** informal events in every state and territory in Australia, including some regional locations. These events provide defence industry participants with regular opportunities to meet and connect with other industry professionals and to understand the latest industry trends and technologies. For information about future events, visit: [DIN's LinkedIn page](#).

Exhibit at Trade Shows

Trade shows provide organisations with an opportunity to exhibit their products and services to a wide audience, including defence industry customers, primes and foreign military personnel.

In Australia, there are three major international trade shows held biennially:

- [Avalon Australian International Airshow \(AVALON\)](#)
- [Land Forces International Land Defence Exposition \(LAND FORCES\)](#)
- [Indo Pacific International Maritime Exposition \(INDO PAC\)](#).

There are a number of smaller domestic defence, cyber and general manufacturing trade shows or industry showcases that may also be of interest to you. These will be advertised regularly via the various industry associations newsletters and in the major defence publications.

SMEs and businesses that are just entering the defence sector should consider connecting with their state or territory government before each trade show. They regularly provide high-exposure exhibition space (pods, usually around 1m x 1m) at low cost for local businesses to exhibit their products, often providing much greater value for money than if the business was to purchase its own floor space.

Attending international trade shows is an excellent way to expose your capabilities or products to a wider market. It is crucial you have a mature product or capability if you are looking at attending an international trade show. It's also suggested that before participating in your first international trade show, you attend a show as a rover so you gain a better understanding of the event. Austrade, Team Defence Australia and the Global Supply Chain Program teams can provide support at international trade shows.

For more information, go to '[Achieving Export Success](#)' section below.

Register on ICN Gateway

The Industry Capability Network (ICN) Gateway is a platform that hosts business profiles on its publicly listed database and shares capabilities with prospective customers.

Many defence primes, including BAE Systems, use the ICN to promote upcoming procurement and contracting opportunities, advertise industry development activities – such as the Navigating Defence Series industry training – and current work packages, and conduct regular market scans via the network of ICN consultants to identify the best suppliers for their projects.

BAE Systems Australia retains 2 active ICN portals:

- [BAE Systems Australia Supplier Portal](#)
- [BAE Systems Hunter Class Frigate Program](#).

Businesses can register an expression of interest for work packages, submit an EOI to join BAE Systems Australia's Enterprise Technical Support Network, receive industry updates and participate in industry engagement and development activities.

The ICN also hosts the Australian Submarine Agency's [AUKUS Pillar 1 - Industry Portal](#). Businesses are encouraged to register their interest and complete a 'Supplier Capability Questionnaire' EOI in the work packages section.

Check Upcoming Opportunities on AusTender

The Australian Government's AusTender website is a central repository of the Commonwealth's business opportunities, contract notices, Approaches to Market and planned procurements.

Australian Government agencies publish all open Approaches to Market at: [AusTender](#).

Sign up to JOSCAR

JOSCAR is the new supplier assurance platform used by Defence's Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group (CASG), BAE Systems Australia, Lockheed Martin Australia, Kongsberg Defence Australia, Babcock Australasia, Boeing Defence Australia, Raytheon Australia, Austal, HII Australia, Northrop Grumman, QinetiQ and SAAB to collect and maintain supplier qualification data.

The platform reduces the amount of paperwork required to supply to defence industry primes by standardising

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questions across the defence industry. This results in faster onboarding for suppliers and access to pre-qualified suppliers who have registered on JOSCAR for other primes.

You could be eligible for a discount on the annual subscription fee if your business is a member of one of the following organisations:

1. Supply Nation
2. Australian Industry and Defence Network (AIDN)
3. Henderson Alliance
4. Defence Teaming Centre.

For more information, visit: [JOSCAR-AU Self Nomination](#).

Join an Industry Association

Joining an industry association provides a range of benefits for businesses operating or looking to supply into the defence sector.

These associations serve as the primary avenue for government advocacy to influence policy and shape industry standards. They provide businesses with access to key stakeholders and decision makers that would otherwise be difficult to engage individually.

Generally, industry associations also deliver networking events that provide businesses with an opportunity to:

- understand Defence priorities
- network, collaborate or partner with industry peers, including primes and other SMEs
- gather market intelligence through access to industry updates or reports, research, market studies and defence industry policy papers

- undertake training or professional development through webinars, workshops, seminars, industry certification and other training courses that enhance defence readiness
- increase your brand awareness and elevate your company profile through industry showcases, newsletters, hosted events at your site, or website feature stories
- demonstrate your commitment to the defence sector, enhancing your reputation with potential customers, partners and government organisations
- access procurement insights that help businesses navigate the complexities of bidding for defence contracts
- access early information on upcoming tender opportunities
- identify and explore potential export opportunities, navigate international defence markets, facilitate partnerships with other defence businesses or apply for international defence research initiatives or programs
- access government grants, subsidies and other funding mechanisms that support defence research, development and commercialisation.

For a full list of Australian-based industry organisations, go to [Industry Advocacy & Resources](#).

Apply for the Defence Industry Study Course (DISC)

Each year CASG run the Defence Industry Study Course, a 6-month program that seeks to develop relationships and promote greater understanding between Defence and industry.

Split over 4-week long modules, participants undertake a series of industry tours and Defence base visits, and receive briefings from a variety of expert speakers. The program is targeted at executives, senior managers and project managers from businesses supplying into the Australian Defence Force and seeks to enhance knowledge of the defence sector and how Defence operates.

Applications typically open in January each year and close in late February or early March. For more information, visit: [Industry Training and Events](#).

Apply for the Defence Industry Leaders Program (DILP)

DILP is a 9-month leadership program coordinated and delivered by the Defence Teaming Centre (DTC) in collaboration with registered training provider, SkillsLab, a SAGE Group company.

Through face-to-face workshops and experiential learning, participants acquire the skills and knowledge to effectively lead and manage multi-party collaborations and understand the complexity of the defence industry.

Program graduates receive a nationally recognised Diploma of Leadership and Management through Skills Lab.

Applications are typically open until November in the preceding year. For more information, visit: [Defence Industry Leadership Program](#).

Attend 'Meet the Primes' events

As a supplier, consider attending Meet/Pitch to the Primes events. They occur throughout the year at trade shows, industry forums and through Defence's Global Supply Chain Program activities.

These events provide businesses with an opportunity to hear about upcoming procurement opportunities or areas of focus in each Defence prime. After the events, businesses usually attend 1:1 'speed dating' sessions that allow the business to pitch their product, service or solution to representatives from each prime and receive feedback on current demand for their solution.

To ensure your business stands out at these 1:1 sessions:

- reflect on the capabilities each prime is seeking and be clear about how you can support their supply chain
- keep your pitch clear, concise and focussed on capabilities – pitch training is available through the Office of Defence Industry Support and some industry associations
- avoid referencing how long the business has been operating, your Australian-ownership, or your status as a SME
- be ready to communicate to the prime why and how your product, service or solution is superior to incumbent suppliers and others on the market
- keep the technical detail to a minimum because representatives at the sessions are typically not engineers or technical experts – when preparing your pitch, keep in mind that if there is demand for your offering, the representatives will need to be able to convey your capability to relevant experts in their business
- bring a copy of your QUAD chart, and offer to send a soft copy via email after your 1:1 session – this enables the representative to circulate your business information to relevant areas of their business with demand for your offering
- incorporate a virtual simulation, prototype/model, other visuals, concept of operations (CONOPS) diagram or other engaging material as part of your pitch
- reference other case studies/successful defence projects you have completed with other primes
- remember to follow up with the representative/s if you agreed to send additional information or arrange a follow up meeting with other areas of their/your business.



5. Accessing Defence Industry Support Programs, Advocacy and Resources

Accessing the right support and resources at the right time can help your business expand its footprint, develop new products, develop your strategy and market approach, purchase new equipment, expand into new markets and so much more. Support is available through the:

- BAE Systems Australia's Industry Development Program – see below
- Australian Government programs and grants – see page 25
- Industry Associations and Professional Networks – see page 27.

Our approach to Industry Development

BAE Systems Australia's industry development approach is informed by the Australian Government's policy and program framework, including the Australian Industry Capability framework, the Global Supply Chain Program and the Defence Industry Development Strategy.

The aim of our industry development efforts is to uplift defence readiness across the sector so BAE Systems Australia, and by extension, the Australian Defence Force, can access the supply chain capability needed to maintain Australia's technological advantage and evolving capability requirements.

Our activities are focussed on supporting the Australian defence industrial ecosystem to grow in scale and size, while also adding complexity. Activities include:

- specialised industry training programs delivered by BAE Systems Australia experts
- business mentoring initiatives
- technology feasibility studies and innovation challenges
- access to 1:1 BAE Systems Australia expert advice
- targeted tasks
- voucher programs
- supplier road shows and pitch fests.

Industry Education

Navigating Defence Series

Free 1-day briefing covering how to enter the defence sector, supply to BAE Systems, meet quality and cyber requirements, estimate for defence projects, and understand APQP basics.

Ideal for: New defence market entrants.

Winning Defence Business

Free 2-day interactive workshop focused on identifying opportunities, engaging stakeholders, developing capture strategies, and creating winning defence proposals.

Ideal for: SMEs pursuing or expanding defence opportunities.

Organisational Resilience

Free 1-day workshop on business continuity and resilience, including disruption planning, decision-making under pressure, war room setup, and continuity management principles.

Ideal for: Active SMEs in defence supply chains.

Estimating for Defence

Free 2-day workshop on developing accurate cost estimates for defence contracts, covering cost modelling, risk and uncertainty, escalation, and pricing considerations.

Ideal for: Active SMEs in defence supply chains.

For more information or to register an Expression of Interest to attend a training, visit the [BAE Systems Australia Supplier Portal](#).

Figure 5: BAE Systems Australia Industry Capability Approach

BAE Systems delivers a range of programs and activities that support the development of Australian sovereign capability.

These programs are widely available across Australia's industrial base and have been curated to aid businesses along their defence readiness journey, providing options for both new entrants and those seeking to scale up their involvement in the Defence industry



Partnering **4** Success

Partnering4Success is BAE Systems Australia's industry-leading Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) program, set from a global framework that segments BAE Systems' supply chain into a category based on global and local criteria aligned to business need.

The program's aim is to target capability uplift and to streamline sourcing decisions where it is appropriate to do so. The program shares information across the global enterprise creating opportunities for the Australian supply chain to compete across programs and efficiencies across our global taxonomy.

Supply chain partners enrolled onto the program are segmented into one of the following categories: Industry Shaping, Strategic, Critical or Emerging. The program identifies opportunities to share and develop capability in the BAE Systems defence supply chain, ensuring focus remains on strategic priorities including ESG, First Nation responsibilities and 'speed to capability'.

Program activities are focussed on supporting the Australian defence industrial ecosystem to shape its strategies. Activities include:

- a dedicated supplier relationship representative (SRR) responsible for advocating for partners and delivering on win-win outcomes
- access to specialised industry training programs delivered by BAE Systems Australia and external experts
- tailored support in developing business strategies
- performance management reviewed at global level
- maturity analysis to support capability readiness
- initiatives to reduce waste in hiring processes and ease of access to early careers talent.

For a full list of BAE Systems Australia's Trusted Partners4Success see page 40. Figure 5 provides a summary of our activities.

Australian Government

The Australian Government funds a range of programs, initiatives and grants to support SMEs develop defence capability and to reduce participation barriers in defence programs, including:

- Australian Industry Capability Program – see page 23
- Grant Programs – see page 25
- Office of Defence Industry Support (ODIS) – see page 26
- Small Business Advocacy Team – see page 26
- Industry Growth Program – see page 26
- Global Supply Chain Program – go to '[Achieving Export Success](#)', page 32.

Australian Industry Capability (AIC) Program

The Commonwealth Government's Australian Industry Capability Program provides the framework to maximise opportunities for Australian industry participation in defence procurements.

The AIC Program requires that tenderers outline their proposed approach to enhance industry capability, and AIC Plans are required for procurements over \$20 million.

For information about public AIC plans and the forecast opportunities identified by contracted defence suppliers, visit: [Public Australian Industry Capability Plans](#).

AIC Practitioners Training courses are run on behalf of the Australian Government each year. These sessions are intended to inform participants of the requirements associated with the AIC contractual framework. For more information about the delivery of the AIC Practitioners Course in 2025 please contact: enquire@aimpoint.edu.au.

Grant Programs

The Australian Government funds several grant programs for businesses seeking to achieve success in the defence sector or grow defence capability. For information about available defence grants, visit: [Industry Grants](#).

In 2024, the Australian Government launched the Defence Industry Development Grant (DID Grant) which provides financial support to local SMEs across 4 streams:

- Sovereign industrial priorities stream: businesses can apply for between \$50,000 and \$1 million to invest in manufacturing plant and equipment required to develop/deliver priority projects.
- Skilling stream: businesses can apply for between \$5,000 and \$250,000 to upskill and train workforce to meet Defence requirements in priority areas.
- Security stream: businesses can apply for between \$10,000 and \$100,000 to improve security posture in priority areas.
- Export stream: businesses can apply for between \$15,000 and \$250,000 to undertake key activities (i.e. international accreditations or equipment purchase) required to achieve export success in priority areas.

Office of Defence Industry Support

Businesses considering supplying goods or services to the defence sector should engage with relevant state and territory advisers from the Office of Defence Industry Support (ODIS).

ODIS is an Australian Government Department of Defence-funded initiative that provides **free** advisory, guidance and mentoring services to SMEs. ODIS's specialist defence advisers can support your business to:

- improve defence business competitiveness
- connect you to defence procurement programs and defence end users
- connect you to industry and innovation initiatives
- provide information and access to upcoming industry briefings and events
- access grants and financial assistance
- achieve export success
- prepare for trade shows and trade mission.

ODIS also manages the [Defence Business Readiness Tool V2](#), which you can use to assess and prioritise your business actions to increase your readiness to supply into the defence sector.

To subscribe to the monthly ODIS newsletter, visit: [Subscribe to ODIS Update](#).

Small Business Advocacy Team

The Australian Government's Small Business Advocacy Team:

- exists to identify and understand issues impacting SMEs operating in the defence industry sector

- advocates on behalf of the sector to achieve policy, procurement and programmatic change at the federal level to remove SME participation barriers in the defence supply chain
- works alongside ODIS, state and territory governments and industry associations.

Industry Growth Program

The Australian Government's [Industry Growth Program](#) is designed to support innovative SMEs to commercialise and scale their products, processes, or services aligned to National Reconstruction Fund priorities. The program operates in two stages:

1. **Advisory Service:** SMEs receive tailored advice from industry experts on commercialisation strategies, market testing, funding avenues, and business model development.
2. **Grant Opportunities:** Based on the advisory report, eligible businesses can apply for matched grant funding under two categories.

Applications are assessed on merit by the independent Industry Growth Program Committee.

State and Territory Governments

State and territory governments often provide funding or deliver industry development programs that improve the readiness and competitiveness of their local defence sector.

Engage with your local state or territory government defence team to find out how your local government can support the growth and success of your business in the defence sector:

- [ACT Government Defence](#)
- [Defence – Investment NSW](#)
- [Defence Jobs QLD](#)
- [Defence NT](#)
- [Defence SA](#)
- [Defence Tas](#)
- [Defence Victoria](#)
- [Defence West](#).

Defence Industry Advocates

Many state and territory governments employ a dedicated defence industry advocate to support the growth of the sector in their jurisdictions. These individuals are generally well connected with senior leaders in Defence and the Australian Government and are available to provide introductions and strategic advice to SMEs supplying into defence.

Industry Associations and Professional Networks

Advanced Fibre Cluster Geelong (AFCG)

The Geelong region is home to a cluster of innovative businesses that are leaders in advanced fibre and composite manufacturing. [The Advanced Fibre Cluster Geelong](#) works to accelerate the growth of the capabilities in the area. Members of the cluster work with Deakin University to facilitate research and business collaboration, promote opportunities for members, conduct site visits and training and the sharing of management and technical best practice.

Ai Group

[Ai Group](#) offers members guidance and networking opportunities across a broad range of industry sectors. The organisation's Defence Council provides a forum for collaboration for Government, industry and Defence stakeholders, which facilitates the exchange of ideas and information to inform policy development.

Members also have access to working groups that cover areas such as exports, commercial, contracting, ethics and security.

Australian Defence Alliance- Victoria (ADA-Vic)

[ADA-Vic](#) is a Victorian based industry network that works to enhance business capabilities for Victorian SMEs. This alliance has established strong relationships with key industry stakeholders. Members benefit from access to exclusive member information, the support provided in navigating defence-related issues, as well as developing networks throughout the industry.

Australian Industry & Defence Network (AIDN)

[AIDN](#) is a national industry network designed for SMEs wanting to do business in the defence and security sectors. It provides advocacy, networking and collaboration opportunities for interested SMEs. AIDN maintains a regular dialogue with key stakeholders in the Australian Government, Defence and other national organisations within the defence industry, allowing this information to be passed onto the SMEs.

Defence Teaming Centre (DTC)

[DTC](#) is a South-Australian based industry association that aims to enhance the competitiveness of the defence industry supply chain. It supports businesses, in particular, SMEs, by facilitating networking opportunities with key industry stakeholders and customers, delivering leadership programs, providing business development advice, and promoting industry partnerships.

Geelong Manufacturing Council (GMC)

The [Geelong Manufacturing Council](#) supports defence industry growth in the south-west Victoria region by encouraging collaboration between businesses, academia and government. The organisation is a hub for knowledge sharing, advocacy and industry networking. Through partnerships with major defence contractors like Hanwha Defence Australia, and a focus on building local supply chains, the council strengthens Geelong's role as a hub for defence manufacturing and technology development.

Henderson Alliance

The [Henderson Alliance](#) is collaborative network of defence industry businesses, based in Western Australia. Their goal is to provide a platform for Western Australia SMEs to form partnerships that allow participation in larger scale projects. It does this through the delivery of training, providing connections with key defence industry stakeholders and access to R&D activities.

Hunter Defence Alliance

The [Hunter Defence Alliance](#) was established to demonstrate the capability in the Hunter region of New South Wales, and to upskill SMEs in the region so they become defence ready. This alliance aims to demonstrate the region's capacity to support defence projects by promoting capabilities to the New South Wales Government and Australian Government.

Indigenous Chambers of Commerce

Most Australian states and territories have established Indigenous Chambers of Commerce that exist to support the growth and success of Indigenous business owners, entrepreneurs, social enterprises and jobseekers. To connect with your local chamber of commerce, visit:

- Victoria: [Kinaway Chamber of Commerce](#)
- NSW: [NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce \(NSWICC\)](#)
- NT: [Northern Territory Indigenous Business Network \(NTIBN\)](#)
- WA: [Noongar Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)
- QLD: [South East Queensland Indigenous Chamber of Commerce.](#)

Industry Capability Network (ICN)

[ICN](#) is a network of procurement and supply chain professionals who connect SMEs with projects across a wide range of industries. Involvement in the ICN allows suppliers to register interest for work, and through work packages, to access projects of any size.

La Trobe City Defence Alliance

The [La Trobe Defence Alliance](#) exists to strengthen the Latrobe Valley's role in supporting Australia's defence industry. It fosters collaboration between local businesses, government and defence organisations to develop advanced capabilities, drive innovation and create economic opportunities. The alliance works to position the region as a key player in defence supply chains and promote sustainable growth through strategic partnerships and workforce development.

South East Melbourne Manufacturers Alliance (SEMMA)

[SEMMA](#) is an industry association that advocates on behalf of manufacturers within the Southeast Melbourne region – a region that has significant manufacturing capabilities across an array of industries. SEMMA promotes members' capabilities to local and international stakeholders and encourages collaboration between members.

Supply Nation

[Supply Nation](#) maintains a database of verified indigenous businesses, connecting them with some of Australia's largest businesses across a large range of industries. Membership provides opportunities to learn and network and is a useful component to add to an organisation's Reconciliation Action Plan.

Victorian Defence and Space Network (VDSN)

[VDSN](#) is an industry network funded by the Victorian Government and delivered by AIDN to showcase the businesses that comprise Victoria's defence and space industries. The key objectives of VDSN are to promote Victorian industry capability to defence primes and other key stakeholders, both domestically and globally, and to identify opportunities for industry growth.

Women's Defence Connection

The [Women's Defence Connection](#) is a Victorian-based not-for-profit that seeks to increase the representation of women in defence industry. The organisation runs monthly networking sessions, professional development workshops and large events aligned to major defence expositions. Membership is free and provides access to a community of professional women in Victoria's defence sector.

Women in Defence Association

[WiDA](#) is a not-for-profit organisation campaigning for gender equity and inclusion within Australia's defence sector. The Association is represented in Western Australia, South Australia, Australian Capital Territory, and New South Wales and runs a range of networking and professional development programs for women in the defence industry.





Accessing the right support and resources at the right time can help your business expand its footprint, develop new products, develop your strategy and market approach, purchase new equipment, expand into new markets and so much more.

6. Understanding the Defence Research and Development (R&D) Landscape

Businesses should engage with the following entities if they wish to:

- connect with universities to explore product or technology defence R&D
- access R&D funding
- showcase their new and/or innovative capability to Defence
- test the applicability of their solution in a defence manufacturing environment.

Australian Strategic Capabilities Accelerator (ASCA)

ASCA is an Australian Government initiative that exists to fast-track the development and deployment of innovative technologies and capabilities within the Australian Defence Force. Through its partnerships with industry and academia, it conducts a range of activities to drive solutions that address strategic challenges and keep Australia at the forefront of defence innovation.

Visit [ASCA's website](#) to stay up to date with the latest: missions

- pitch days
- Army innovation days
- innovation challenges
- opportunity/ problem statements
- emerging and disruptive technologies program updates.

Australian Defence Science and Universities Network (ADSUN)

[ADSUN](#) is a defence R&D network that fosters research collaboration between the business community and academia to achieve defence capability outcomes.

The organisation facilitates R&D opportunities between industry and university partners, through a collective of state-sponsored defence R&D networks, outlined below. Whilst the networks themselves do not engage in any R&D, they do help to identify, enable and promote research collaboration opportunities between universities, government and industry sectors. Some of

the networks publish state-specific defence R&D capability directories, which detail the research specialisations and areas of expertise in each jurisdiction.

These entities can support a range of innovation activities including:

- skills development and work placements
- defence R&D investment attraction advice
- showcasing Defence R&D and innovation
- brokerage of relationships between Defence, industry and academia
- provision of general Defence capability and research advice
- minor research collaboration grants and/or activation funding
- identification of R&D opportunities.

Defence Science Institute (DSI) (Victoria and Tasmania)

The [DSI](#) is funded jointly by the Victorian Government, the Australian Government's Defence Science and Technology Group (DST Group) and the following universities: Victoria University, RMIT University, Deakin University, the University of Melbourne, Monash University, La Trobe University, Federation University, Swinburne University, Australian Catholic University and University of Tasmania.

Defence Innovation Partnership (DIP) (South Australia)

The [DIP](#) fosters research collaboration between Defence SA, DSTG, University of South Australia, University of Adelaide and Flinders University.

Defence Innovation Network (DIN) (New South Wales and ACT)

[DIN](#) seeks to increase defence R&D across its network of nine ACT and NSW universities, including: Australian National University, Charles Sturt University, Macquarie University, University New South Wales, The University of Newcastle, The University of Sydney, University of Wollongong, University of Technology Sydney and Western Sydney University.

Defence Science Centre (DSC) (Western Australia)

Funded by the WA and Australian Governments, the [DSC](#) facilitates connections between Curtin University, Edith Cowan University, Murdoch University and the University of Western Australia.

Queensland Defence Science Alliance (QDSA) (Queensland and Northern Territory)

[QDSA](#) is funded by DSTG, the Queensland and member universities across Queensland and the Northern Territory. Participating organisations include: Griffith University, James Cook University, University of Queensland and Charles Darwin University.



7. Achieving Export Success

Exporting is a critical driver of business growth, especially given the relative limitations of Australia's small market size. The Australian Government considers export success an important factor in achieving its goal of growing the middle-tier of defence industry businesses. Consequently, there are programs, resources and financial assistance available to help your business achieve export success in international markets.

Engage with the Australian Government's Global Supply Chain Program

The Global Supply Chain Program (GSCP) is a key support mechanism for Australian SMEs working towards exporting their capabilities into global defence programs. The initiative, delivered out of Defence's Australian Industry Capability Division, supports businesses to identify, pursue and secure export opportunities within the global supply chains of major defence industry prime contractors.

GSCP partners receive funding from the Australian Government to establish a team that provides access to their international markets, supports Australian businesses to secure contract opportunities, and ultimately, enters

the primes' global supply chain. These teams are expected to use their internal influence with their global colleagues to advocate for the introduction of Australian capability within their local programs.

This activity delivers a competitive and sustainable industry base. It provides Australian businesses with additional revenue streams and diversity of work.

The Australian Government states that the role of each prime GSCP team is to:

- *"identify opportunities across business units and at all technology readiness levels to provide opportunities to Australian companies"*



- *identify, assess and qualify capable Australian companies to be part of their global supply chain*
- *provide mentoring, training and regular feedback, including why a company was successful or unsuccessful in its tender*
- *organise meetings for SMEs with key decision-makers within the primes and provide advocacy overseas, including at Team Defence Australia trade events*
- *work with the other primes' GSCP teams to grow Australian industry, share information to boost exports and reduce the burden on the SME".*

The program has been around for over a decade and in 2024, the GSCP was expanded to 13 defence primes.

They are:

- Babcock Australasia
- BAE Systems Australia
- Boeing
- HII Australia
- Kongsberg Defence Australia
- L3 Harris
- Lockheed Martin Australia
- Moog Australia
- Northrop Grumman Australia
- Raytheon Australia
- Saab
- Rheinmetall Defence Australia
- Thales Australia.

Each prime provides information about the capabilities they are seeking from the supply chain. To check whether your capability addresses an area of the primes' supply chain demand visit: [Global Supply Chain Program](#).

BAE Systems Australia delivery mechanism for the GSCP is the Global Access Program (GAP). To request assistance from the BAE Systems Australia GAP team, fill out an expression of interest at: [ICN, BAE Systems Australia Global Access Program](#).

Businesses attending overseas trade shows or requiring 1:1 support to navigate export control regimes should connect with BAE Systems Australia's GAP team.

For more information about BAE Systems Australia GAP, visit: [Global Access Program](#).

Consider the applicability of relevant Defence Export Controls

Businesses need to be aware of the domestic and international export control obligations and regimes that apply in the countries they are doing business. Significant penalties apply for businesses found to have violated export control regulations, both in Australia and abroad. This can include criminal charges, fines and revocation of export permits.

Engage with the Australian export control regulator

Engage with Australia's Defence Export Controls (DEC) regulator as early as possible so you are aware of your obligations. The DEC regulator oversees the export of military and strategic goods, technologies and services so they align with our national security, international obligations and non-proliferation policies.

DEC assists a range of stakeholders to meet their Australian export control law obligations, including government, higher education and research sectors, industry and private individuals. Its purpose is to control and prevent the export of items that could compromise Australia's security or contribute to global instability, and to ensure all exports meet strict standards and cannot be used inappropriately by other countries or entities.

More specifically, the Australian Government requires that DEC is:

- *"enabling use of the Australia, United Kingdom and United States licence-free environment*
- *assessing applications to export, supply, publish or broker military and dual-use goods and technology listed on the Defence and Strategic Goods List (DSGL)*
- *issuing permits or licences, including for brokers, for such transfers, if they are determined to not prejudice Australia's defence, security or international relationships*
- *prohibiting the export, supply or provision of goods, technology or services that may be used for, or to assist, a Weapons of Mass Destruction program."*

If your business is planning to export, it is important to understand if there are any extra requirements your business needs to consider under Australian law, including those set by the Australian Border Force or the Australian Sanctions Office.

For more information visit: [Export Controls Framework](#).

Understand Safeguarding Australia's Military Secrets (SAMS) legislation obligations

In May 2024, the Defence Amendment (Safeguarding Australia's Military Secrets) Act 2024 (Cth) was enacted. The legislation is intended to strengthen national security by protecting Australia's military tactics, techniques and procedures, by preventing people with sensitive Defence knowledge from training or working with certain foreign entities.

Businesses will need to consider the application of this legislation and support their employees with their Foreign Work Authorisation applications:

- Who are former Australian Defence Force members, including the Defence Australian Public Service and the Australian Submarine Agency who will work for an overseas government body or military
- That hold Australian citizenship or permanent residency and are engaged in the provision of training to a foreign government body or military relating to:
 - "Part 1 of the Defence and Strategic Goods List
 - Military tactics, techniques and procedures".

For more information visit: [Defence Export Controls Safeguarding Australia's Military Secrets](#).

Understand the US export control regime

The United States manages military and dual-use (civilian and military) exports through the following distinct regulatory frameworks, each overseen by a different government agency:

- Export Administration Regulations (EAR)
- International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR)
- Foreign Military Sales (FMS).

Export Administration Regulations (EAR)

Agency: Managed by the US Department of Commerce's, Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS)

Scope: Regulates dual-use or commercial exports

Requirements: Export licenses or applicable exceptions

- Dual-use items have civilian applications but may also have military uses or are controlled for national security reasons. These items are listed in the Commerce Control List (CCL) and identified by an Export Control Classification Number (ECCN). Items that are not listed on the CCL are classified as EAR99.

- Businesses exporting to the US should review the 'licence requirements' section of the ECCN and the Country Chart to determine the licencing needs and exceptions. For example:
 - License required: If the destination country has an 'X' under the relevant control reason, unless a license exception applies
 - No license required: If the destination country does not have an 'X' under the control reason.

International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR)

ITAR governs the export of defence articles, technical data and defence services designed or modified for military purposes. These items are listed on the United States Munitions List (USML), which includes defence and space-related items, services and technologies.

Agency: Managed by the U.S. Department of State's, Directorate of Defense Trade Controls (DDTC)

Scope: Regulates munitions and military exports

Requirements: Licenses (e.g., DSP-5), agreements (e.g., TAA, MLA) and approvals for retransfers or re-exports

- Defence articles, technical data and defence services are subject to ITAR's jurisdiction, regardless of location or intended recipient, including a non-US person abroad.
- Any export of ITAR-controlled items requires prior approval from the U.S. Department of State. Subsequent retransfers or re-exports of ITAR-controlled items outside the US also require prior approval.

Foreign Military Sales (FMS)

The US Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Program is a US Government regime to provide hardware, training, data, or services (Controlled Material) to other governments, whether those materials are controlled under the United States Munitions List ([USML](#)) or the [CCL](#) (FMS Controlled Material), to a foreign Government, including the Commonwealth of Australia.

Agency: Managed by the U.S. Departments of State's, Bureau of Political Military Affairs Office of Regional Security and Arms Transfer (PM/RSAT)

Scope: Regulates both dual-use or commercial and munitions and military exports

Requirements: Government to Government sales are made pursuant to a Letter of Offer and Acceptance, Australian Government then retransfer to industry via a Third-Party Retransfer (TPR) request.

- Authorises the retransfer, sale, disposal or change in end use of any FMS Controlled Material procured by the Commonwealth of Australia from the U.S. Government via an FMS Program.
- Examples include: use of contractors for support services, demilitarisation of a defence article, access for demonstration, intangible transfers.

Understand AUKUS Exemptions & Regulatory Changes

Australia, the US and UK have introduced Export Control reforms to support the tri-national AUKUS security and defence partnership. These changes are designed to maximise license-free trade to help deliver the overall AUKUS objectives by reducing or removing the requirement for licensing approval for exports, re-exports and re-transfers of export-controlled hardware, technology and services amongst and between the US, UK and Australia.

With effect from 1 September 2024:

Australia

- introduced an exemption for the export of certain goods and technology to the UK and US without an export permit
- also strengthened its export control framework, with new offences taking effect from 1 March 2025.

United States of America

- released an International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) exemption for the export, re-export and re-transfer of certain ITAR goods and technical data to Authorised Users within the AUKUS nations without a licence;
- implemented a number of changes to the Export Administration Regulations (EAR), by removing most (but not all) licence requirements for transfers of EAR controlled goods and technology to Australia and the UK.

United Kingdom

- released an AUKUS Open General Licence for the export of certain goods and technology to Authorised Users within the AUKUS nations.



The Australian Government has advised that to export DSSL items from Australia without a permit using the Australian licence-free environment, businesses must satisfy the following criteria:

1. "Recipient: the supply or provision is to an Australian/ UK/US citizen or permanent resident, corporation or government/government authority.
2. Location: the supply is to, or the services are received at, a place in Australia/UK/US.
3. Goods/technology: the DSSL goods/technology are not on the [Excluded Goods & Technologies List](#) or [Australian Military Sales Program](#).
4. Registration: the exporter/supplier is registered as an AUKUS authorised user.
5. Pre-notification: Defence has been notified of the export/supply before the activity occurs (via the [My Australian Defence Exports \(MADE\) portal](#))."

A key requirement for using the AUKUS exemptions is that entities must be members of an AUKUS Authorised User Community. Companies can apply to become an AUKUS Authorised User to benefit from the Australian licence-free

environment) and/or an Australian Authorised User (to benefit from the US ITAR exemption) via the Australian Regulator DEC.

BAE Systems Australia Limited and ASC Shipbuilding Pty Limited are approved as both AUKUS and Australian Authorised Users, so can benefit from the Australian, US and UK AUKUS Exemptions to transfer goods and technology licence-free, provided all other relevant requirements are satisfied.

Suppliers are strongly encouraged to apply for membership into the AUKUS Authorised Community to be able to use the AUKUS licence-free environments.

Consider your Cybersecurity Maturity Model Compliance

If you are exporting to or fulfilling a US contract, you need to understand your Cybersecurity Maturity Model Compliance (CMMC).

Figure 6: CMMC Model understanding is required when exporting to or fulfilling a US contract. Source: <https://dodcio.defense.gov/cmmc/About> (The appearance of U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) visual information does not imply or constitute DoD endorsement).

CMMC Model		
	Model	Assessment
LEVEL 3	134 requirements (110 from NIST SP 800-171 r2 plus 24 from 800-172)	• DIBCAC assessment every 3 years • Annual Affirmation
LEVEL 2	110 requirements aligned with NIST SP 800-171 r2	• C3PAO assessment every 3 years, or • Self-assessment every 3 years for select programs. • Annual Affirmation
LEVEL 1	15 requirements aligned with FAR 52.204-21	• Annual self-assessment • Annual Affirmation

CMMC is a U.S. Department of Defense tiered framework designed to enforce and verify the protection of sensitive unclassified information shared with its contractors and subcontractors.

In a 4-phase plan over three years, CMMC will be implemented into all US defence contracts. Contractors and subcontractors will need to achieve the specific CMMC level as a condition of contract award.

Figure 6 provides more information about the model, noting each tier builds on the previous one. For more information, visit: [About CMMC](#).

CMMC Voucher Program

If you are currently or expect to be exporting to the US in future, and require support to implement CMMC compliance uplift activities, support may be available through BAE Systems' CMMC Voucher Program. For more information contact au.globalaccessprogram@baesystems.au.

Apply for Financial Support

In addition to the [Defence Industry Development Grants – Export Stream](#), the Australian Government provides several funding mechanisms for businesses looking to export defence capability.

Apply for Export Market Development Grants

AusTrade's Export Market Development Grant program provides Australian SMEs with grants to market their products and services internationally, and engage in export training.

Grants are allocated on a tiered basis and are dependent on the business' current export status, that is, ready to export, currently exporting, exporting to new markets.

Grants range from \$20,000 to \$80,000 per financial year. For more information and to apply, visit: [Export Market Development Grants](#).

Apply for Defence export facility loans through Export Finance Australia

Export Finance Australia is an Australian Government entity that provides financial solutions to help Australian businesses compete in global markets. Its

primary function is to provide loans, guarantees, insurance and bonds to exporters and businesses in export-related supply chains, in particular when private financing options have been exhausted.

For information about accessing Export Finance Australia loans, visit: [Loans, Export Finance Australia](#).

Exhibit with Team Defence Australia (TDA)

If you are ready to pursue global markets and showcase your product or services internationally, then exhibiting with Team Defence Australia (TDA) provides you with a low-risk, cost-effective and high exposure option.

The Australian Government's TDA provides Australian export-capable businesses with a platform to showcase their defence and dual-use goods, technology, services and solutions on the global stage. TDA works alongside ODIS, Austrade and state and territory governments.

TDA organises and coordinates industry participation in international trade shows, missions and exhibitions, providing pre-departure training and advice, and organising in-market networking opportunities with foreign governments and other potential customers.

TDA undertakes the procurement of the required exhibition floor space and funds the stand build. Therefore, participating businesses only pay for the travel and accommodation associated with the event. This provides Australian companies with a cost-effective option to market their products, benchmark themselves or undertake market intelligence activities internationally.

If you are selected as an exhibitor on the TDA stand, ODIS is available to support your business' preparation, including presentation skills training, QUAD chart development (required for all TDA trade events) and cultural awareness training.

To get involved, register on ICN and submit an expression of interest at: [CASG, Team Defence Australia](#).

For more information, email: TeamDefence.Australia@defence.gov.au.

Engage Austrade in country specialists

Businesses are encouraged to reach out to Austrade for expert guidance on export strategies and support services. Austrade offers valuable advice to help Australian companies expand globally and succeed in international markets.

Austrade manages more than 100 offices in Australia and internationally, assisting businesses to achieve export success and attracting inbound investments. They also run government programs to increase trade and investment, and provide commercial insights to shape government policies.

Businesses planning to export should engage with Austrade's [Go Global Export Academy](#), a free, online learning resource designed to support Australian businesses at every stage of their export journey.

The Academy offers a series of live and on-demand webinars tailored to various export needs. These sessions are organised into three categories:

1. Export Essentials: Covering foundational topics such as creating an export plan, understanding HS codes, and navigating contracts.
2. Export Masterclasses: In-depth discussions on advanced topics like opportunity analysis, intellectual property, and legal and financial considerations.
3. Sector and Market Insights: Insights from Austrade's global trade teams on specific sectors and markets, including regions like Asia, Europe, the UK, the Middle East, the Americas, and the Pacific.

Austrade employ dedicated in-country directors for the defence sector worldwide. If you would like to engage the advice of one of these directors, complete an enquiry form via Austrade's [Contact Us page](#), or alternatively, speak to Austrade or TDA at a trade show.

For more information, visit: [Austrade's website](#).

Engage with State Government International Trade and Investment Offices & Specialists

Some state and territory governments have overseas, in-market trade facilitation offices and specialists who can support your business to achieve success in international markets. Businesses embarking on a trade mission or joining a trade show with TDA should engage with the relevant in-market specialist well in advance of the trip. The specialists can promote your business, set up customer meetings and connect you with decision makers in foreign markets, government or other defence primes.



Support is currently available if your business is located in one of these jurisdictions:

- New South Wales: [New South Wales](#) has a network of 21 overseas offices and provides several resources to support export success in key markets
- Victoria: [Global Victoria](#) has a network of 23 overseas offices and employs 2 in-market defence specialists who cover the UK, Europe, Israel and USA
- Western Australia: [West Australian Government Office](#) employs an in-market specialist who covers the UK, Europe and Israel
- South Australia: [South Australia](#) has a network of 10 overseas offices and employs an in-market defence specialist in the UK
- Queensland: 12 [Trade and Investment Queensland](#) commissioners operate across seven global locations to support businesses to export to those markets.

Engage with Australian Military Sales

As part of your export-focused business development activities, consider engaging with the Australian Military Sales (AMS) team. The AMS team plays a key role in supporting Australian sovereign capabilities and military sales initiatives. They facilitate international government-to-government transfers of:

- materiel from the Australian Defence Organisation, comprising the Australian Defence Force, Australian Department of Defence and other related organisations

- sensitive technology originating in Australia
- products and services provided by the Australian defence industry, as needed.

AMS creates opportunities for the Australian defence industry to tap into Defence's extensive network of national and international military partners. It achieves this through connections within the military diplomatic community.

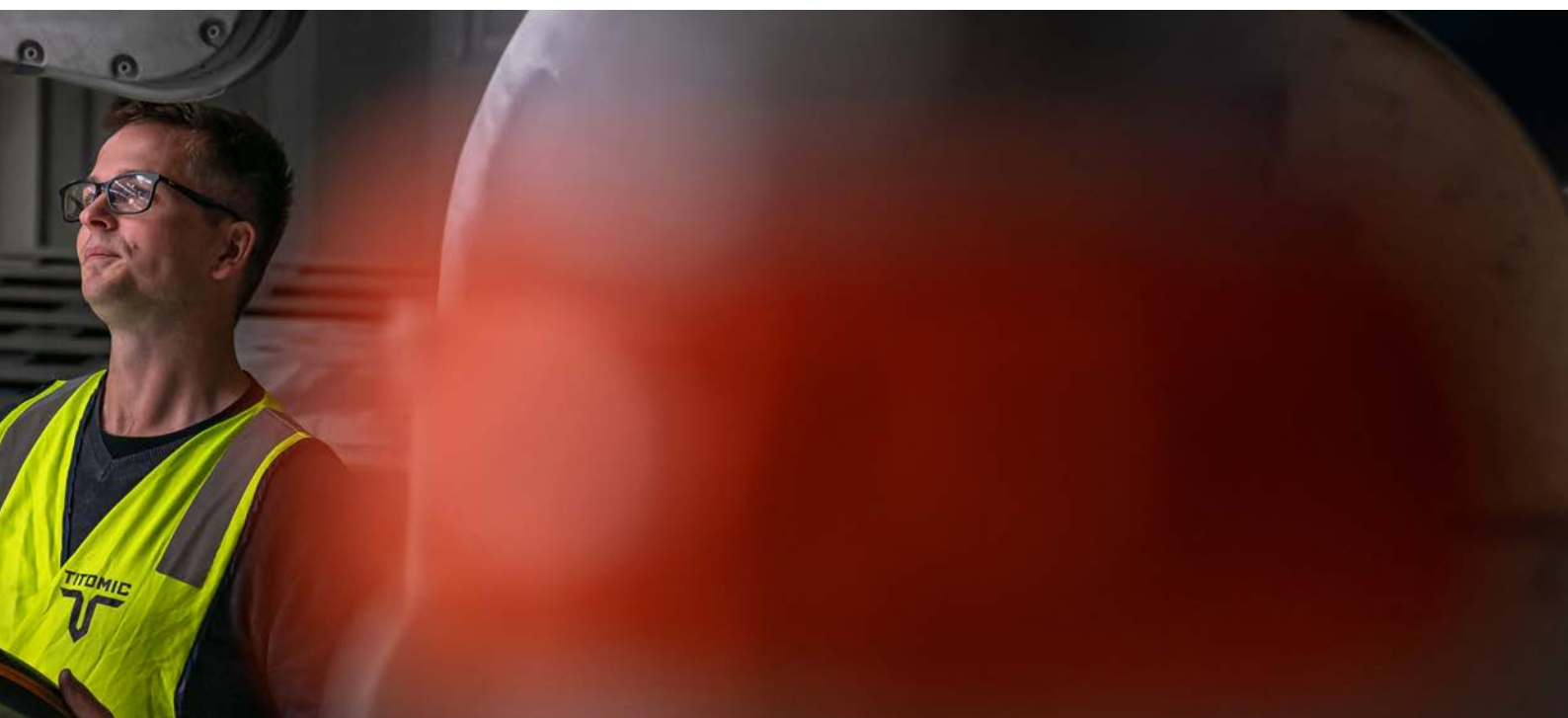
For more information, visit: [Australian Military Sales](#).

List your Capability on the Australian Defence Export Catalogue

The Australian Defence Export Catalogue, previously known as the Australian Defence Sales Catalogue, showcases a range of Australian defence industry products and services from every state and territory in Australia.

The 2024 edition features over 300 Australian defence businesses, showcasing export-ready technologies, products and services. Additionally, it includes details on surplus Australian Defence Force equipment available for sale through government-to-government arrangements.

For more information, visit: [Australian Defence Export Catalogue](#).





Partnering 4 Success



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