



# FACT SHEET

## AUKUS PILLAR II SIGNATURE PROJECT

### PAYLOADS AND ENABLING SYSTEMS – UNCREWED UNDERSEA VEHICLES

Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States have announced the first **AUKUS Pillar II signature project: cutting-edge payloads and enabling systems for AUKUS partners' Uncrewed Undersea Vehicles (UUVs)**. With delivery starting in 2027, this project focuses on the advanced technologies carried by the UUVs, and how they work effectively with our AUKUS partners.

The signature project will reinforce our collective deterrence efforts and superiority in the maritime domain through the accelerated delivery of advanced capabilities to our warfighters. The project strengthens existing AUKUS initiatives under Pillars I and II, and bolsters the shared commitment of AUKUS partners to regional stability, security and freedom of navigation.

### Signature project impact

The AUKUS Pillar II signature project will deliver UUV payloads and enabling systems that can be used across each country's UUVs. The AUKUS Pillar II signature project will:

- Enable AUKUS partners to work together to protect critical national seabed infrastructure, deploy cutting-edge surveillance, reconnaissance and strike capabilities, conduct logistics operations and bolster superiority in anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare, mine countermeasures, electronic warfare and contested littoral manoeuvre.
- Increase AUKUS interoperability through key enablers, including shared standards, trilateral operational concepts, and common control systems.
- Develop and prove capabilities through trilateral exercises and experimentation, by harnessing shared resourcing and the best of our research and development communities to drive innovation.

### Undersea environment

The undersea environment is vital to the security and prosperity of AUKUS nations, supporting global trade, national defence, and international security. The signature project will strengthen our edge in the increasingly contested undersea domain.

### Delivery

AUKUS partners are taking a phased approach to delivery:

- First, by developing national payloads that will be interchangeable and integrated by each partner nation. Each nation's development will focus on a different type of effect the payloads will deliver.
- Then AUKUS partners will jointly develop and produce trilateral payloads and enabling technologies, including next generation payloads.

### Key concepts

#### UUV

An underwater vehicle that operates without an onboard crew. UUVs can work alongside crewed ships and submarines, including to:

- provide surveillance of large ocean areas;
- protect underwater infrastructure; and
- support naval operations.

Uncrewed and undersea warfare capabilities are a force multiplier for crewed platforms and enhance the agility, asymmetry and survivability of our warfighters.

#### Payloads

The systems a vehicle carries to accomplish its mission, such as sensors, navigation or offensive capabilities.

#### Enabling systems

The systems that support how UUVs operate, such as to share information and work together with other crewed and uncrewed vehicles.