

## **Decision Time for Future Submarine**

Submarines are central to any viable Australian defence strategy. They are likely to be the only naval vessels capable of secure operations along the length of Australia's sea lines of communication in the foreseeable future.

Critics have raised concerns about the cost and capability required of the Future Submarine program. Some suggest that Australia's requirement could be satisfied by a small off-the-shelf design at a much lower cost.

The Kokoda Foundation paper, *Sub Judice: Australia's Future Submarine*, has found that there is simply no commercial off-the-shelf conventional submarine that comes close to meeting Australia's requirements.

No justification could be found for the additional costs of a nuclear program, thought to be of the order of thirty to forty per cent, even if Australia had a nuclear industry and the supporting infrastructure.

The paper concluded that of the available options, an evolution of the Collins design emerged as the best way to benefit from the experience of operating a modern submarine fleet in Australia's maritime domain.

A thorough analysis of comparable programs confirms that the cost of building the submarine will be markedly less than some published estimates and that there is no cost penalty for an Australian build.

With the appropriate price disciplines in place, a fleet of 12 submarines capable of meeting all of the current capability requirements might be built for less than half the oft-quoted estimates.

After extensive consultations with some of the most successful naval program managers and shipbuilders in Australia, the report concluded that the main factors contributing to program success are the quality of the project leadership and a broadly based commitment to program success rather than any particular contracting model or procurement ideology.

The report also urges policy makers to move quickly to overcome bureaucratically and politically imposed delays in the Future Submarine program as already the Collins submarines will be required to serve longer than originally planned.

**The Kokoda Foundation's report, *Sub Judice: Australia's Future Submarine*, will be launched today, Thursday the 19<sup>th</sup> of January 2011, at 10am by its author, Brice Pacey, at the Boat House by the Lake, Grevillea Park, Menindee Drive, Barton.**

Ends

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