

the Chamber

INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT

Ghost Shark: Leveraging a trilateral innovation ecosystem to win the next war

by David Goodrich OAM, Executive Chairman and CEO, Anduril APAC and Richard Drake, General Manager, Anduril UK

INDUSTRY EXPERTISE

Four key observations on the delivery of defence infrastructure

by Roger Noble AO DSC CSC
General Manager Defence, Laing O'Rourke



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Welcome to the Defence x Infrastructure Edition of our Quarterly Magazine

BY ANDREW LOW, CHAIRMAN, AUSTRALIAN BRITISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

As we approach the end of 2024, I am delighted to present our final magazine of the year focusing on two of the Chamber's key sectors of interest – defence and infrastructure. These have long been significant topics for the Chamber but 2024 has been a particularly noteworthy year, with the third anniversary of the AUKUS partnership, the release of the Australian Government's National Defence Strategy (NDS) and Integrated Investment Program (IIP), as well as completion of Sydney Metro City and Southwest, and continued delivery of Victoria's biggest build, the Suburban Rail Loop.

Ticky Fullerton, Chief Executive Officer, and her team have been incredibly busy hosting a series of events to engage and educate our Members on these defence developments and infrastructure megaprojects. In May, we were thrilled to present a Defence Capabilities Forum in Melbourne, showcasing the State's defence credentials and tackling the demand for skills uplift. This was followed by our second annual Defence Catalyst in the London. Just weeks after the UK's snap election, Ticky and Head of International Programmes, Jennifer Cramond, were able to bring newly elected government representatives together with defence primes and strategists for a stellar 3-day programme. An incredible feat indeed!

A staple of our programme, our conversations on Australian and UK infrastructure shifted from the traditional focus on rail and transport to addressing infrastructure, productivity, social and economic outcomes, and the changing demands of our communities. We held fantastic seminars and briefings across the country, including those on

urban transit and mobility, social license, housing and planning, and a Sydney Metro Update from none other than Peter Regan PSM, Chief Executive. Now in its 8th year, our flagship Infrastructure Catalyst, focused on the housing crisis, Transport Oriented Development, Modern Methods of Manufacturing and delivering on decarbonisation. It was a refreshing take on an old classic, and we are looking forward to what next year's Catalyst will bring.

What struck me throughout these discussions on both defence and infrastructure was the common thread of innovation. This edition of the magazine showcases the demand for innovation across industries, starting with a compelling article on the future of defence innovation from David Goodrich OAM of Anduril APAC and Richard Drake of Anduril UK. The Chamber's Head of Marketing, Olivia Scullard, also had the opportunity to interview Simon Marr, Managing Director of Marr Contracting on the Aussie craneage experts' legacy of innovation, as well as Kathryn Essex, the British High Commission's new First Secretary for Security and Defence Industry (ANZ), on all things AUKUS, bilateral collaboration and much more.

I encourage you to delve into the insights and perspectives shared within this edition, and to get in contact with our authors to continue these conversations.

Finally, on behalf of the Australian British Chamber of Commerce, I wish you a happy holiday season and a prosperous New Year. We look forward to supporting our Members and working with each of you in 2025!



Ghost Shark: Leveraging a trilateral innovation ecosystem to win the next war

BY DAVID GOODRICH OAM, EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN AND CEO, ANDURIL APAC AND RICHARD DRAKE, GENERAL MANAGER, ANDURIL UK

“AUKUS Pillar II involves trilaterally developing and providing joint advanced military capabilities... It is a generational opportunity for deeper collaboration with two of our closest allies... But make no mistake – the success of AUKUS is not predetermined – it must be built.” – Jessica Lewis, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs

Australia and our allied partners are facing the most challenging and complex set of strategic circumstances since WWII. It is important to take the learnings from history as we navigate the troubled waters of the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

In January 1942, a month after the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the War Production Board. Its purpose was to convert the factories of peacetime industries into manufacturing plants for weapons and military equipment for the fight. Through the war, similar industrial efforts were made across allied nations – bringing the best and brightest into a collaborative effort that ultimately triumphed over evil.

Once again we face fierce adversaries who have a visceral disdain for rules-based order. The race is on to develop and deploy emerging technologies in the

fight for freedom against coercion and destabilisation. AUKUS Pillar 2 is a generational opportunity to harness an untapped trilateral innovation ecosystem, particularly in improving interoperability, industrial capability and the integration of artificial intelligence technologies as a potent force multiplier and importantly a strategic deterrent.

However, in the words of Assistant Secretary Lewis, “the success of AUKUS is not predetermined – it must be built.”

Clearly government driven co-development is the leading factor in creating the AUKUS garden of opportunity. But industry has an important role to play in planting the trees, watering the garden, harvesting the fruit and setting the table. We can and must create a unique advantage through coordinated industry-to-industry collaboration.

While Anduril Industries is headquartered in the United States, we have established strong footprints of talent and sovereign capability in Australia and the United Kingdom to create our own trilateral innovation ecosystem that supports Anduril’s mission to deliver the best defence technology to the allied forces as they defend democracy and our shared values.



The first prototype Ghost Shark on the dock at Garden Island in Sydney. Photo: Anduril Australia.

The Ghost Shark extra-large autonomous undersea vehicle (XL-AUV) programme is a real manifestation of what can be achieved in a trilateral innovation paradigm.

Ghost Shark is being developed in Australia by Australians. It has been developed in partnership with the Defence Science and Technology Group (DSTG), the Advanced Strategic Capabilities Accelerator (ASCA), the Royal Australian Navy and Anduril Australia. We are partnering with 42 Australian companies on this programme, growing a powerful Australian industrial base as we grow our own team.

We're also proud to partner with companies from other AUKUS nations, such as the family-owned UK company Sonardyne, headquartered in Yateley, Hampshire, with more than five decades of work in sub-surface navigation. As a result of our engagement with them, Sonardyne has opened an engineering office in Australia, with a team of engineers working on providing critical underwater communications and navigation expertise for the Ghost Shark programme.

The test-bed vehicle which has helped accelerate Ghost Shark development, called the Dive-LD, and the open architecture, AI-powered operating system it uses, LatticeOS, are Anduril U.S. innovations. Lattice provides sophisticated sensor processing on the vehicle at the edge, allowing it to undertake more complex missions. This enables significant advances to existing subsurface systems. Anduril has hundreds of engineers working on Lattice across the U.S, Australia and the UK, so it is constantly improving, keeping pace with the rapidly changing threats. On 18 April, we were pleased to deliver the first Ghost Shark prototype – one year early and on-budget. We are now moving into manufacturing phase for the Royal Australian Navy, and then for export to our allies and partners around the world.

For Ghost Shark, a manufacturing base in the Southern Hemisphere brings significant advantage for AUKUS partners. We can rapidly replenish stock on this side of the planet. A diversified supply chain is no longer optional, it is essential. The pandemic showed us why.

However, shared development across diverse companies separated by international borders still presents challenges. Delivering on the bold AUKUS vision will require industry players to adopt core principles like open architecture, software-first design, 21st century manufacturing, and scalable supply chains.

While AUKUS governments are working on collapsing export barriers for defence industry, they need to also encourage and support the growth of the non-traditional defence industrial base by allowing exports of capabilities not yet adopted by our defence forces. To meet the emergent threat, we will all need to think differently, think smarter and use the strengths that our adversaries don't have. The ability to collaborate, co-operate and bring the best that we all have, openly to the table.

“To meet the emergent threat, we will all need to think differently, think smarter and use the strengths that our adversaries don't have.”

The success of AUKUS is not predetermined – it must be built. As we strive for greater interoperability between our countries and platforms, we must also ensure that our approach to technology development, building factories, and even working together is equally interoperable and cutting-edge. We have incredible tech-industry manufacturing experience within the trilateral ecosystem that will need to be leveraged to the fullest extent if we are to deter aggression and if called upon, to win the next war.



Defence Industry Minister Pat Conroy, Executive Chairman and CEO Anduril Australia David Goodrich OAM, Chief Defence Scientist Professor Tanya Monro, Commander Fleet Command RADM Chris Smith, Anduril Australia Senior Vice-President Engineering Dr Shane Arnott, and Head of the Advanced Strategic Capabilities Accelerator Professor Emily Hilder with other ADF officials on 17 April.

Meet Kathryn Essex

First Secretary for Security and Defence Industry (ANZ)

Kathryn Essex was recently appointed the role of First Secretary for Security and Defence Industry (Australia and New Zealand) at the British High Commission in Canberra. Chamber Head of Marketing, Olivia Scullard, speaks to Kathryn about her new role, our Defence Catalyst and her time on and off the rugby field.

Welcome Kathryn! Thank you for taking the time out to speak with me today. You've just landed in Canberra and taken up an exciting role at the start of November. For Members who haven't met you yet, where were you before, and what was your last posting?

I've just arrived from Washington, D.C., where I spent almost five years at the British Embassy as the First Secretary for Capability Coherence. I worked within our Defence Acquisition & Technology team. With scientists on one side and commercial / industry experts on the other, my team was in the middle, looking at bilateral capabilities and opportunities, but also addressing cross-cutting policy issues such as climate change, economic security and industrial resilience. I've been deeply involved in AUKUS Pillar II since it was announced in September 2021, and my team provided support to the UK regarding developments in D.C., while working closely with our US and Australian counterparts to drive progress.

As the UK's new First Secretary for Security and Defence Industry (ANZ), how do you see your role strengthening the UK-Australia relationship?

I think it's really about building on the foundation laid by AUKUS. While AUKUS is a trilateral agreement, it clearly has significant implications for our bilateral relationships. One of the biggest successes thus far has been the changes to ITAR (International Traffic in Arms Regulations), which mark a generational shift in how the US interacts with its closest allies and their defence industries. While the focus is on the US, these changes also open bilateral opportunities for the three nations beyond AUKUS projects.

My team's role is to understand what these changes mean for our defence industries and how we can leverage them to facilitate more collaboration between

the UK and Australia, as well as trilaterally. We share similar mindsets and have many opportunities to work with each other, especially within the AUKUS framework.

So, how do you see the AUKUS partnership evolving over the coming years, and what are the opportunities and challenges for both Australia and the UK, especially post-US election?

My background to date is very Pillar II so apologies if I'm very heavy on that angle! On the Pillar I side, the fact that the SSN-AUKUS will feature a British design with American technology built in Australia is remarkable. It combines the best of all three countries, with significant cross-pollination. Australians, for example, are already embedded in the design team in the UK. We're not just sitting on our laurels and assuming we have the best, it's about learning from each other across all the areas of AUKUS.

I've been particularly impressed by the strength of Australia's SME (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) community. This is critical for both Pillars I and II. Pillar II, in particular, has two key components: creating the enabling environment for our industries and governments to work more seamlessly together (such as ITAR reform) and aligning our national systems to speed up collaboration and get capability into the hands of the warfighter as soon as possible.

Australia's ingenuity and innovation, its fantastic SMEs, and its growing capabilities in areas like hypersonics, quantum (and many others) present significant opportunities for collaboration with the UK. Although Australia is in the Indo-Pacific and the UK in the Euro-Atlantic, our security is intertwined and many of the capabilities we are investing in are region-agnostic, with massive potential for joint efforts.



Professor Emily Hilder, Head, Advanced Strategic Capabilities Accelerator; Kathryn Essex, (as First Secretary - Capability Coherence, British Defence Staff, British Embassy Washington); Benny Johanson, Founder & CEO, Chaos 1; and Ticky Fullerton, Chief Executive Officer, Australian British Chamber of Commerce, at the Chamber's Defence Catalyst 2024 in London.

It's vital that we bring SMEs into the defence supply chain. Defence is a challenging environment for small companies to break into so I think it's crucial that we harness the incredible talent in Australia, including by drawing from other production and manufacturing trades, and enticing them to work more closely within the defence realm.

This topic pops up time and time again, especially at our Defence Catalyst. We were delighted to have you at our second annual Defence Catalyst over in London. I'd love to get your impressions on your first Catalyst, and your thoughts on the 2024 programme?

I attended the Defence Catalyst whilst still in my previous role in the US, but with an eye on what was to come next. It was absolutely fantastic. It brought together a diverse group of individuals and covered a wide range of defence areas. I appreciated how it addressed some tough topics, but in a constructive way, which made it so engaging. The focus on UK-Australian ties was particularly valuable. Again, AUKUS is a trilateral agreement but it's clear that the UK and Australia are critical partners. The Catalyst highlighted the importance of the two smaller partners

in this agreement working closely and developing together, ensuring our strengths are celebrated. I found it genuinely excellent and learned a great deal.

We're really looking forward to hosting the Catalyst in 2025 and highlighting the key defence strengths in our bilateral relationship. Another major theme of the 2024 programme was the rapid pace of technology.

Given the developments on the frontline in Ukraine, how can Australia and the UK collaborate to remain at the forefront of defence innovation?

Working with General Rob McGowan, our AUKUS Pillar 2 lead, I've come to agree with him that industry is the "sixth domain."

If Ukraine has taught us anything, it is the real need to innovate on the battlefield, and that government doesn't have a monopoly on good ideas. The relationship with industry is shifting from a simple consumer-producer dynamic to a more collaborative one, where we bring industry into every stage of development, from the initial phases through to the battlefield. This requires a shift in culture and trust.

“We need to rethink how we engage with industry, ensuring we are able to attract and bring in companies and finance from outside the defence space in a safe and productive way.”

Not every lesson from Ukraine is universally applicable but we've learned a lot about what doesn't work, which is just as valuable. We need to rethink how we engage with industry, ensuring we are able to attract and bring in companies and finance from outside the defence space in a safe and productive way. The challenge is ensuring a steady flow of ideas, keeping momentum, and navigating the “valley of death” in transitioning from concept to delivery. This is a massive undertaking for each AUKUS partner.

Now, let's talk rugby! As a former England rugby team manager, you bring a unique perspective to your role in diplomacy.

How did you get started, first at the UK Ministry of Defence and then at the British Embassy in Washington?

As a youngster, all I wanted was to play sport and represent my country. I initially bounced between sports but ultimately studied sports science at university. I came away from it thinking, 'clearly I'm not a scientist,' but I genuinely loved the sports perspective.

In my third year at university, I became the athletic union president, followed by vice president and student union president. Those roles allowed me to stay connected to sport while also growing in leadership. It was at University that I first tried playing rugby and I played for England Students for two years.

I was down in Adelaide playing rugby with a friend of mine and ended up with a knee injury. I couldn't run

this one off and ended up taking a 26-hour train ride, crutches and all, to see one of the ex-players from the club who was a top surgeon in Sydney. He ended up doing the surgery under Medicare for me as a fellow player, and it's that generosity and community that carried me through that challenging period.

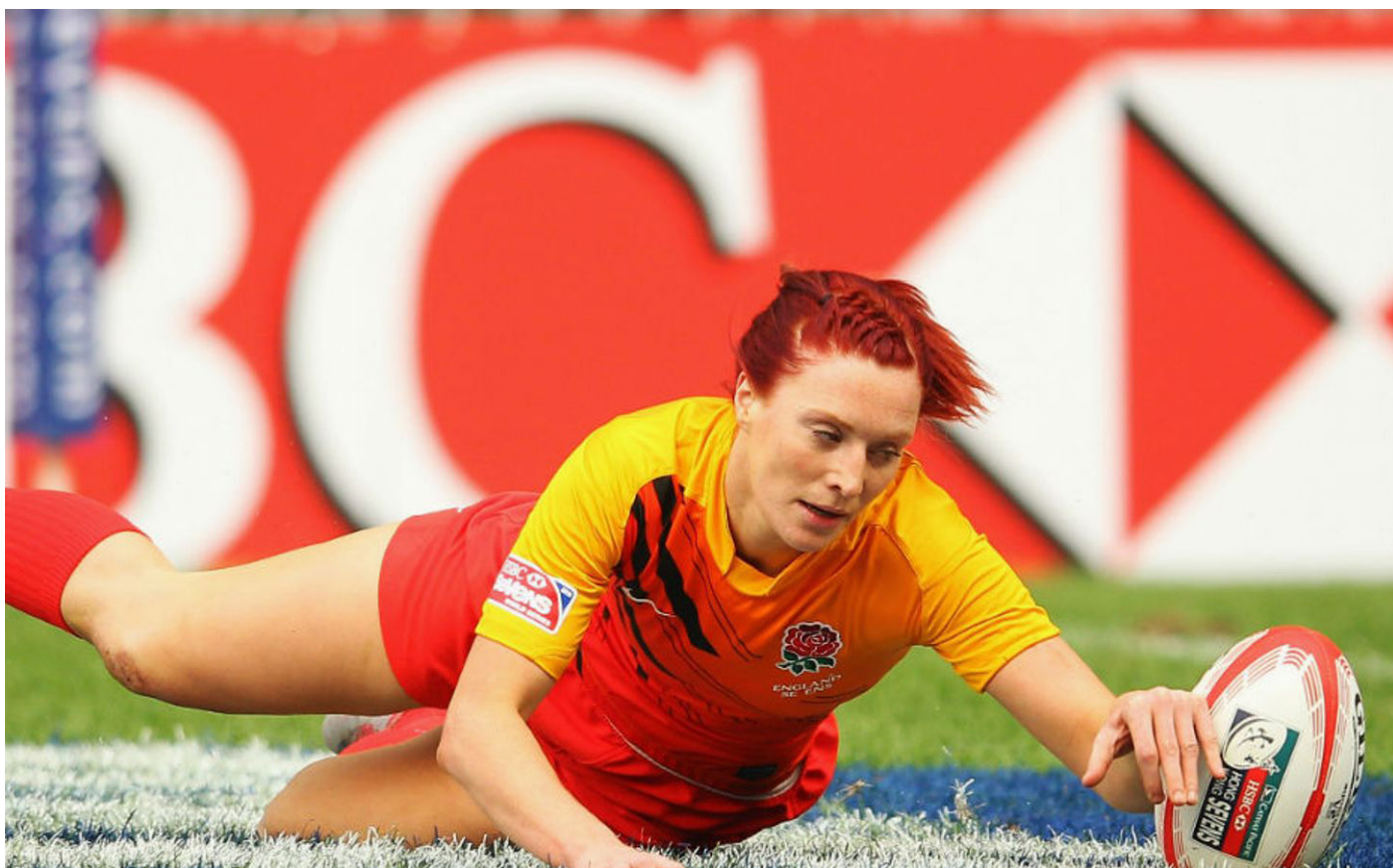
After my playing career ended, I became an England Women's team manager (logistics and organisation) for the Students team, then England A and later the England Sevens Women's team. I was lucky enough to go to two Sevens World Cups in Dubai 2009 and Moscow 2013 and numerous tournaments, with a highlight being the team winning the Hong Kong Sevens in 2012, which was just an incredible experience. All of this was in my spare time alongside working.

My first job out of university was as the first-ever Women and Girls Rugby Development Officer in Greater Manchester for the Rugby Football Union. I then moved down to do a similar role at Twickenham, but being around rugby and unable to play was almost torturous. It was around this time that I had a look online and saw the opportunity to join the Ministry of Defence (MOD) as a Generalist. I nervously put in an application and went through a number of stages, but really enjoyed the interview process, strangely enough, and thought this could be the place for me. I started in the UK Ministry of Defence in May 2005, so almost 20 years working in Government!



Lord Dominic Johnson of Lainston CBE, Former Minister for Investment; Kathryn Essex, (as First Secretary - Capability Coherence, British Defence Staff, British Embassy Washington); Jeremy Hallett, Executive Chairman, Space Industry Association of Australia; CEO, Brindabella & Company; Mark Stevens, Managing Partner, Periscope Capital Partners and Founder, Arican; and Grant Hume, Operating Partner, BOKA.

“I nervously put in an application and went through a number of stages, but really enjoyed the interview process, strangely enough, and thought this could be the place for me.”



England were crowned champions of the IRB Sevens Challenge Cup with a tight 15-10 win over World Champions Australia in Hong Kong in March 2012.

I've had amazing opportunities in numerous government roles, including working in Ministerial Private Office from 2009-2011 (so during the previous change of government in the UK), as a UK negotiator on security and defence topics in Brussels before and after the EU referendum. I completed military staff college at Shrivenham and did a Masters in Defence Studies at King's College which was brilliant and meant that I spent a lot of time with the military.

During my career I have seen so much cross-over in terms of those transferrable skills. The military are the ultimate team and my experience throughout my time in the MOD has built on the lessons I learned in sport. It showed me the importance not only of a good leader, but good followers and developing that environment.

Finally, what can we expect from the 2025 British and Irish Lions Aussie Tour?

I cannot wait for the Lions tour next year – it is going to be excellent. The Australian side had some excellent results during their recent tour, including beating England, so that has set up a fascinating context. The beauty of women's sport and rugby in particular is that it's less about your size and more about skillset. Yes, there's still the physical side with huge tackles, rucking and mauling but there's also a lot more moving of the ball and for spectators, that's what you want to see. Whilst some women's players are 'professional' – very few (if any) make a living from the

game – so they often have to balance two careers. It was recently announced there's going to be the first-ever British and Irish Lions Women's Series in New Zealand in 2027. We saw a Barbarian Women's team for the first time back in 2017 (for whom my sister played – she also won the World Cup with England in 2014), and it's just a completely different mindset. When you bring together a team in a short space of time that's not training and playing with each other all the time, like the Lions, you've really got to focus on the basics and creating a good team environment, so I think that's my number one tip.

Having been involved in women's rugby since 2001, the changes are extraordinary. Female athletes have had to fight for everything, but whilst there is still more to go, we've finally reached a point where women's sport is celebrated and supported.

“When you bring together a team in a short space of time that's not training and playing with each other all the time, like the Lions, you've really got to focus on the basics.”



Navigating the surge in Australian Defence Investment

BY PETER COLACINO
PROJECT STRATEGY AND DELIVERY LEADER – NSW, MOTT MACDONALD

What does the horizon look like for public investment in defence over the coming years, and how does that compare to civil infrastructure spending?

Australian defence spending is projected to hit a record \$55 billion for 2024-25, growing to \$67 billion by 2027-28 and then continuing to ratchet up to exceed \$100 billion per year during the 2030s. The pace and scale of growth is significant, with growing pains likely to result as the industry flexes to support it. The stakes are high to support the sector in managing this ramp up.

The defence spending surge and the recent boom in the national public infrastructure programme have strong parallels and shared risks. Civil infrastructure spending also surpassed \$100 billion per annum for the first time in 2022, up from approximately \$40 billion in 2016-17.

What lessons have we learnt from surges of investment in infrastructure, and the impact on capital project delivery?

The 2021 Infrastructure Market Capacity Report found that the impacts of the pace and scale of surging investment contributed to cost escalation (around 9%) and project delivery time slippages (around 10% slower than forecast).

Tight timeframes and a fixed funding envelope mean that scope is at risk of being compromised. A contractor operating within a fixed price, fixed timeline contract is motivated to reduce scope to ensure a project is delivered on time and on budget. The strength of the relationship between client and contractor, and a supportive commercial model, are key to avoiding these risks.

The right commercial model focuses the delivery team on the most material priorities for the client and project, while aligning incentives to ensure a fair return for their partners – this is particularly important in the current environment of highly complex projects and variable market conditions.

Alternative contracting approaches present an opportunity to manage the trade-off more effectively. Models to better support an open dialogue between client, contractor and supply chain have been developed in response to the challenges experienced in civil infrastructure, and are improving risk management and project performance.

Is collaborative contracting a potential solution?

To respond to the rapid investment surge, we need new tools in our toolkit. Not every problem is a nail in search of a hammer. A collaborative approach allows for more nuance, with project risk allocation tailored to the project, the market conditions, and the capability of the client and the supply chain.

Collaborative contracting offers an opportunity to actively manage risk, accelerate delivery, and support innovation. It encompasses a spectrum of commercial arrangements, ways of working, contractual models and behaviours to support, rather than a set and forget approach.

The defence sector is well placed to unlock the benefits of collaboration and leverage established, long-term strategic relationships. Collaborative contracting models, such as Delivery Partner, provide the opportunity for Australian clients to partner with domestic and international industry to leverage experience gained offshore and to bring this experience to the local market. These models have been proven in the defence industries of our AUKUS partners, as well as the Australian water and transport infrastructure sectors.

What role can private investment play in responding to the surging demand?

In addition to collaborative delivery models, partnering relationships with private capital can also strengthen the sector's ability to respond to growth. Increased commercial discipline, upfront innovation and whole of life asset optimisation are key benefits.

Private finance can also allow projects to be brought forward from the planned delivery program, enabling capabilities to be operationalised sooner in a constrained budget environment. They also allow government access to world-class capabilities and research.

Partnering defence projects with private finance is also a well-worn path for AUKUS partners. The UK and USA have sector-specific models of private finance collaboration, as well as borrowing from the infrastructure sector. Meanwhile, the NZ Defence Force has committed to the exploration of the use of private finance to deliver the Ōhakea Air Force base program, which includes a new accommodation block and explosive storage facility.

While not consistently acknowledged, forays in the use of private finance to deliver supporting infrastructure, such as barracks and headquarter facilities, have been successful in Australia. The defence sector has been willing to explore the potential to deliver new projects on brownfield assets using private finance within their current pipeline, including at Garden Island Defence Precinct in Sydney.

The return of private finance to the defence sector is a welcome opportunity to accelerate the program to deliver new capability and can also provide long-term options to maintain and optimise existing facilities, helping to flatten and plateau the investment surge. The benefits are significant, bringing forward capability, reducing capital expenditure and controlling pressures on costs and the workforce.

Mott MacDonald is a trusted partner for some of the most complex and critical defence and security equipment and infrastructure programmes worldwide, giving our clients what they need to be operationally ready and effective.

We are world-class engineers with proven leadership in modern methods of construction, climate, carbon and nature – having developed industry standards in all areas. We drive exemplary programme delivery and supply chain management. And we provide digital advice and solutions at an organisation, operation and project level.

Find out more about our defence and security services on our [website](#).

“To respond to the rapid investment surge, we need new tools in our toolkit. Not every problem is a nail in search of a hammer.”



Meet our new and renewing Q4 Members

If you would like an introduction to any of these Members, please get in contact with us:

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Reach a discerning audience of C-suite executives, government officials, and industry leaders shaping the future of defence and infrastructure in Australia. Our magazine provides a unique platform to showcase your expertise and connect with key decision-makers. Contact Olivia Scullard, Head of Marketing, for more information.

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A man with short dark hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt, stands with his arms crossed in front of large, dark, coiled industrial cables. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the industrial setting.

Marr Contracting – a proud Chamber Member – is building an outstanding reputation for excellence in craneage solutions that are helping to drive new industrial and civil construction projects across the globe. Behind this Australian success story sits a terrific yarn of a family business and its values that started almost a century ago.

Lift the Bar: Marr Contracting's Legacy of Innovation

1926 was a year of great events and inventions. Queen Elizabeth II was born in London; Robert Goddard launched the first successful liquid fuel rocket in Massachusetts; and Gordon Robert Marr designed and built one of Sydney's first cranes.

With the huge milestone of their centennial in 2026, Simon Marr, Managing Director, reflected on Marr Contracting's legacy of innovation with our own Olivia Scullard, Head of Marketing, Australian British Chamber of Commerce.

Innovation runs through Marr's DNA

Marr's journey began with a spark of ingenuity. Following a bout of illness and doctor's orders 'to take up smoking and drinking' instead of hoping to

get better, Gordon Robert Marr found himself working at the family foundry, E.A. Marr and Sons, mainly with small-scale cast iron boilers for the Colonial Sugar Refinery (CSR). Looking around him, he saw a gap in the local market and decided to build the business' first crane. Despite initial scepticism from his father, who doubted the demand for multiple cranes in Sydney, Gordon's determination won him over.

This bold move laid the foundation for the Marr family's enduring commitment to pushing boundaries and solving complex construction challenges, says Simon Marr, Managing Director. 'At the heart of everything we do – and in fact, the beginnings of where we came from – is innovation. Nowadays, we innovate, we challenge the market to think differently about craneage, and we offer solutions that add value to our clients' projects.'

A String of World-Firsts

It's no secret that the construction industry has long been seen as conservative and risk averse. It might be an uphill battle tackling construction conservatism, but the results are always worth it, says Simon. "It's a real journey, and it takes clients a bit to get used to it – us challenging the status quo. They might make assumptions about what they can and can't do, about the challenges of certain jobs, but it's a case of 'you don't know what you don't know.' Where we're most successful with our clients is when they come to us with a vision of what they want to do, an open mind as to how they might achieve their goals, and they trust us to realise that vision by developing a unique solution that supports their construction methodology."

Bringing seemingly impossible projects to life is Marr Contracting's bread and butter. With a string of world-firsts to their name, it's clear that the business pushes the boundaries with aplomb — and this has won them contracts across the world. One of their most incredible projects was the construction of the **world's longest suspension bridge in Turkey**. Working with their client, DL E&C-Limak-SK ecoplant-Yapi Merkezi Joint Venture (DLSY JV), Marr developed a solution that allowed large modularised sections of the bridge towers to be fabricated in a controlled environment offsite before being delivered to the worksite by barge for installation instead of lifting smaller components and welding onsite. Completing two world record lifts in the process, Marr's approach contributed to the bridge opening more than 12 months ahead of schedule.

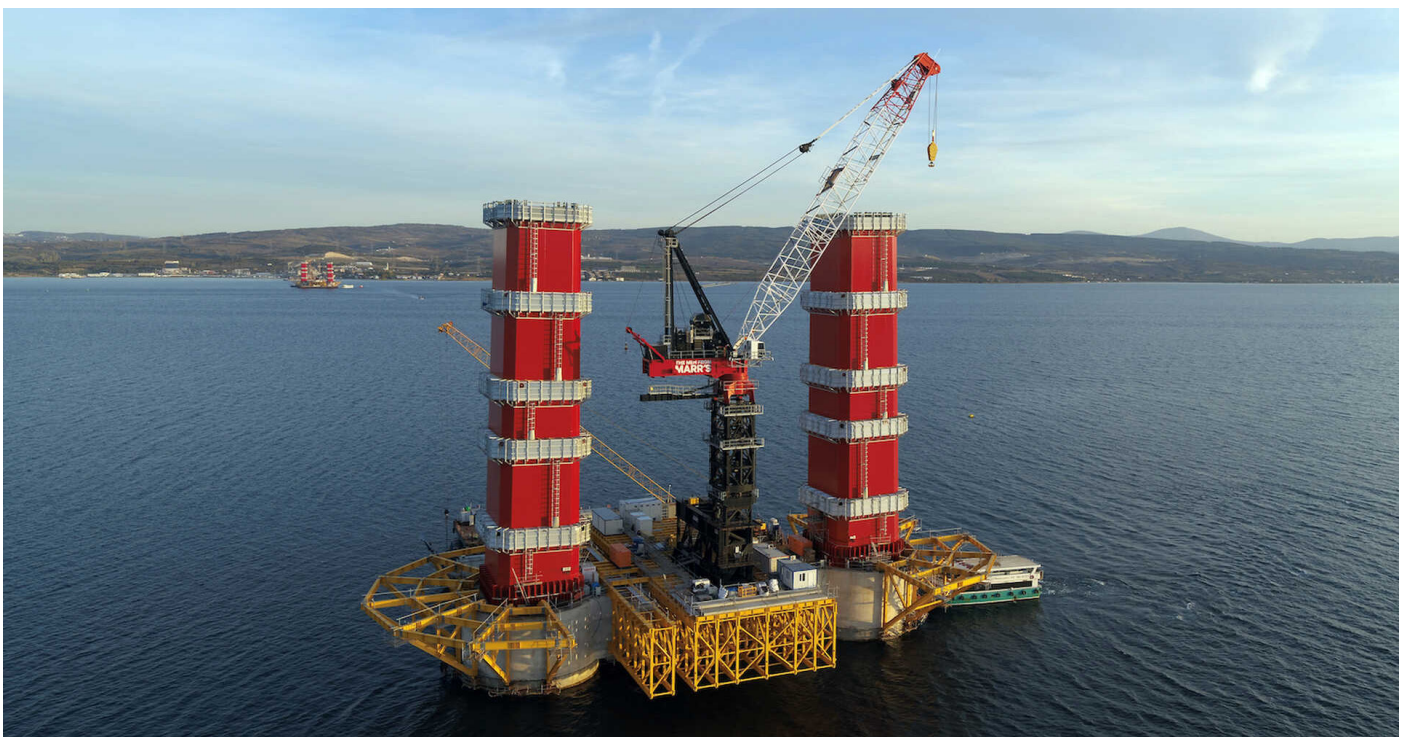
"Our MO is continuous improvement. After every project we complete, the team comes together for a learning session where we assess what went well,

what could have been better, and how do we learn from it? And ultimately, it's about how do we take these learnings to add value to future projects?" says Simon.

Driving Productivity to deliver on Sustainability goals

Marr's 'thinking big' approach coupled with retrospective assessment means it can support more sustainable construction methodologies. "Lower carbon construction requires innovation and productivity – and those are two things Marr delivers," Simon says. "Instead of isolating elements of our project delivery, we take a multi-dimensional view to what sustainability means. In 2022 we adopted the use of a 100% renewable, synthetic fuel (HVO100) in our machines but the real change – and where we find most improvement – is around productivity. How do we shorten project times, enable modular construction (and the associated benefits of offsite construction of prefabricated components) to reduce the number of lifts on a project and reduce complexity at the work front?"

Simon recalls Marr Contracting's work on a major infrastructure project in the United Kingdom which adopted an off-site fabrication approach and required the help of Marr's heavier lifting and larger cranes. According to Simon, this did wonders from a sustainability point of view. "It's improving safety by reducing complexity at the work front and allowing projects to share the economic benefit amongst a wider community. There's less travel to and less congestion on project sites. They're able to use more efficient ways of construction, they're able to decrease the program time. That's where we can really make an impact not just in terms of sustainability, but in delivering value to the project as a whole."



“It was hard at the beginning. People were pushing back, saying that’s not how we build in the UK, but I think it comes down to the fact that it was a new approach to lifting that had previously not been an option.”

From Sydney to Somerset: Leveraging learnings from across the world

While this fresh approach has been welcomed on projects such as Hinkley Point C, Simon admits that Marr’s drive for innovation was initially met with some resistance in the UK as it was in Australia. Offsite manufacturing and prefabrication were well established in the UK building industry, but no one had approached cranes to support new methods of construction like Marr before. “It was hard at the beginning. People were pushing back, saying that’s not how we build in the UK, but I think it comes down to the fact that it was a new approach to lifting that had previously not been an option.”

From the world’s smallest tower crane, the M40R, to the world’s largest capacity tower crane, the 330-tonne capacity M2480D Heavy Lift Luffing (HLL) crane, Marr has changed the face of modular construction. Their heavy-lifting expertise and experience in the successful delivery of large-scale projects on home soil have won them further contracts on **Lostock Sustainable Energy Plant (LSEP)**, a return to Hinkley Point and most recently, **HS2 Old Oak Common Station superstructure**.

“We’re trying to shift the conversation away from ‘it’s not about how many cranes you have, it’s about how many lifts you need to do.’ You can reduce the amount of lifting by lifting larger pieces, and less of them. And there’s a lot of benefits that comes to a project from that. Improved productivity is one, sustainability is another, and it also sets the foundation for a safer

site, because you’ve got less high-risk activities occurring across the project.”

“We point back to the successes we’ve had in Australia, the Middle East, Asia and other parts of the world and bring those valuable learnings into the UK market, but we are also learning from our clients in the UK, especially across areas where the UK is more advanced than the Australian market.”

Making the most of the Australia-UK Free Trade Agreement

This drive to enter the UK market and do things differently harks back to Marr’s humble beginnings. Simon and his team have been tenacious in their problem solving, using the resources, proven track record, knowledge and networks available to them to support their entry into new markets.

One of those tools is the Australia-UK Free Trade Agreement (AUKFTA) which entered into force on 31 May 2023. Over a year on, Simon says the AUKFTA was just the push Marr Contracting needed to successfully expand in the UK. “Although we already had some success entering the UK market, we’ve definitely seen it become easier to play on a level playing field now that the Free Trade Agreement is in force.”

“We can tender for government work on equal footing with UK businesses, which is a significant benefit for us. Although there’s still some way to go, there is also more flexibility in deploying our workforce, both with Aussies going to the UK and UK employees coming this way. For a global business, that’s critical. We can move people around more easily, and gain experience from both markets to get the best of both worlds.”

Simon offered a pearl of wisdom for businesses setting out on this same international growth journey, reminding us that the AUKFTA, like all trade deals, is supplementary to the ambition and determination that made Marr Contracting the business it is today: “Be persistent. Be patient. Back your vision and what you are trying to achieve. Most importantly, don’t give up.”

“Be persistent. Be patient. Back your vision and what you are trying to achieve. Most importantly, don’t give up.”

NO PROBLEM IS TOO BIG FOR US

MARR CONTRACTING
ARE WORLD LEADERS
IN THE DESIGN AND
DELIVERY OF HEAVY LIFT
CRANES AND COMPLEX
CRANEAGE SOLUTIONS.

NOT JUST CRANES AND A CREW FOR HIRE, WE'RE BIG THINKERS AND PROBLEM SOLVERS WHO LOVE A CHALLENGE. WITH A STRING OF FIRSTS TO OUR NAME — INCLUDING THE DESIGN OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST CAPACITY TOWER CRANE, THE 330-TONNE CAPACITY M2480D HEAVY LIFT LUFFING (HLL) CRANE — WE BELIEVE THAT ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE, NO MATTER HOW BIG OR COMPLEX.



MARR'S M2480D WORKING ON CONSTRUCTION
OF THE 1915ÇANAKKALE BRIDGE IN TURKEY

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Four key observations on the delivery of defence infrastructure


BY ROGER NOBLE AO DSC CSC
GENERAL MANAGER DEFENCE, LAING O'ROURKE

Few major infrastructure projects in Australian history are as important than those that will enable the building, sustainment and operations of Australia's future nuclear submarine fleet. Defence rightly identifies infrastructure as one of the fundamental inputs to capability. This is a core truth for the effective operation of our future submarines.

AUKUS submarine infrastructure is large scale, complex and nuclear. This is national iconic infrastructure whose positive impact on the Nation will go far beyond the submarines. Given the strategic priority it is critical the construction effort is effective and timely. The taxpayer also deserves and rightly expects a professional and efficient delivery outcome. A safe and secure solution is an essential 'no fail' requirement that must sit at the centre of all efforts.

Laing O'Rourke has a long history of over 40 years of successful delivery of complex, large scale Defence and non-Defence infrastructure projects in both Australia and the United Kingdom. This includes the construction of civil nuclear power stations, such as Hinkley Point C, which has delivered the company a deep knowledge in the delivery of demanding, large projects constructed under a stringent nuclear regulatory regime.

In Australia, Laing O'Rourke commenced infrastructure delivery in support of the French Attack Class submarine at Osborne, South Australia. This experience enables us to offer four key observations that will aid the achievement of Australian, Defence and AUKUS partner goals.



These four observations are drawn from experience and both valuable and hard won. They are offered as a start point for further dialogue and discussion. We believe they are critically relevant to meeting the daunting but important challenge Australia is so committed to meeting.

Construction Integration into the Enterprise effort is key

The early and effective integration of the constructor into the submarine enterprise is essential to effective and efficient delivery of infrastructure. Previous submarine and nuclear experience have stressed the need for collaborative governance arrangements that incorporate the constructor and enable direct, regular and positive interaction with the boat builders, sustainers and, critically, Defence and the key client stakeholders. A team approach is essential. Starting early is recommended.

Safe, assured and efficient nuclear construction is data driven, transparent and begins early

Over ten years nuclear construction practice in the UK has delivered the seminal lesson of the importance of data. To efficiently deliver assured, safe, and efficient infrastructure a fully digital model living at the heart of the construction method and regulatory assurance function is essential. This ultimately underwrites quality, safety and assurance on which the confidence of the Australian community will rest. Ideally, how you start matters greatly and will enable an enduring assurance framework to be central and enduring.

The is no substitute for experience, knowledge and culture

The depth of individual and organisational knowledge and experience is vital in the delivery of large-scale complex projects and programmes. Nuclear regulatory governed infrastructure will need to leverage international experience locally in Australia. When subject to programme pressures and rigorous governance it is the capacity of the organisational team, combined with a collaborative culture that will allow adaptation and agility in delivery without compromise to safety and assurance.

Security must be a constant and designed into the enterprise

The security of the nuclear submarine capability is paramount. The construction of the infrastructure must ensure and reinforce the enterprise protection system. Given the points above, processes and policies must allow for the transfer of people, expertise and knowledge into the delivery effort, including from offshore and authorised non-Australian sources and individuals. Early advice and collaborative engagement with constructors will greatly increase the essential robust security system around the wider capability.

Highlights from across Australia and the UK



Victoria's Defence Capabilities:
Jobs & Skills, Supply Chain &
AUKUS Pillar 2
Friday 31 May 2024



Defence Industry Lunch with the
Hon Pat Conroy MP
Tuesday 6 August 2024



Spot a picture of yourself and want to post it on socials?

You can find photos from our previous events on our website - don't forget to tag @BritishChamber in your posts!

Australian British Infrastructure Catalyst
Monday 30 September to Thursday 3 October 2024



News on your fellow Chamber Members

Does your business have any recent successes, achievements or upcoming events that you would like to share with the rest of the Chamber? If so, we'd like hear about it. Email submissions to Olivia Scullard, Head of Marketing



NIOA expands global footprint, opens UK office

The NIOA Group has announced its expansion into the United Kingdom, further reinforcing its commitment to strengthen allied defence industry ties. Group CEO Robert Nioa made the announcement during a speech at the prestigious Australian British Chamber of Commerce Defence Catalyst dinner in London.

The three-day Australian British Defence Catalyst (ABDC) brings together high-level stakeholders from the UK and Australia including defence ministers, defence primes, military leaders and academia to discuss capability development through innovation and collaboration.

Conference keynote speakers include Australian High Commissioner, former Australian Defence Minister and co-author of Australia's Defence Strategic Review Stephen Smith and the new head of the British Army General Sir Roly Walker KCB, DSO, ADC.

The NIOA UK office, set to open at Abbey Wood in Bristol, will serve as a hub for NIOA to work more closely with existing British industry partners while also exploring emerging munitions manufacturing and military supply opportunities.

Mr Nioa said establishing an office in the UK was a logical next step for the company given the trilateral AUKUS security pact.

"As a company we are committed to operationalising the industrial collaboration envisaged by our collective governments under the AUKUS agreement... and it's not AUKUS without the UK," Mr Nioa told the audience.

"From an AUKUS technology exchange perspective this completes our Australia, UK, US network. Our first engineers are on site, albeit in temporary desks while we get our building fitout finalised."

"Our intention is for this office building to also act as our European headquarters in support of all of the different NIOA Group businesses.

"We will be looking to build close relationships and support Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S) in their objectives and also build close connections with other UK businesses for both UK and International focussed efforts."

BMD joins SA Water's landmark \$3.3 billion capital programme

BMD has secured a major Pipeline Delivery Partner (PDP) contract with SA Water, undertaking a share of \$700 million worth of essential water and wastewater infrastructure upgrades over the next four years.

In collaboration with SA Water, Diona, and Leed Engineering, BMD will install trunk water and sewer pipes that support the construction of new housing. As part of SA Water's record \$3.3 billion capital programme, these critical works will help unlock 40,000 new allotments and drive housing growth across South Australia.

BMD Framework Manager Paul Sorgiovanni emphasised the significance of this partnership.

"BMD is pleased to be one of three PDP companies, enhancing SA Water's capacity to deliver these significant assets. This programme represents an incredible opportunity for BMD to contribute to the future of South Australia by building industry-leading water infrastructure," Mr Sorgiovanni said.

"By prioritising collaboration, innovation, and sustainability, we're committed to delivering exceptional outcomes that benefit communities and support growth. We look forward to bringing our relationship-based approach and expert water capabilities to these transformative projects," he added.

The works will focus on duplicating extensive pipeline networks and upsizing trunk mains to meet demand, with the programme's supply chain already including three major framework partners.



Arup appointed to lead BlueFloat Energy and Nadara Partnership's floating offshore wind innovation study

Global engineering and sustainable development consultancy Arup has been appointed by the BlueFloat Energy and Nadara Partnership to assess emerging

floating offshore wind technologies for its Scaraben and Sinclair wind farms.

Arup will be reviewing a range of floating wind innovations, considering the opportunities and benefits they present along with potential risks that may occur when bringing these innovations to the market.

Scaraben and Sinclair each have a proposed installed capacity of 99.5MW. The seabed exclusivity rights were awarded in 2023 following an application to the innovation element of the INTOG leasing round initiated by Crown Estate Scotland in 2022.

This element of the leasing round was created to trial innovative methodologies and technologies to accelerate roll out across larger-scale wind farms in the future, helping to reduce the levelised cost of floating offshore wind, and minimise the environmental impact of projects.

Currently, Arup is assessing several innovations to consider their feasibility for inclusion in the Scaraben and Sinclair wind farms. Arup will provide the BlueFloat Energy and Nadara team with insights into which innovations have the most potential to accelerate and facilitate the delivery and operations of commercial-scale floating offshore wind projects in Scotland.



Moving and managing
money globally

 Expense report

Travel budget

- harry@company.com
- Flights
- \$1797AUD
-  Approved

This is not just a card

It's also easier expense management

- ✓ Instantly issue virtual cards for teams worldwide
- ✓ Hold and spend in 30+ currencies
- ✓ Budget controls and workflows that streamline approvals and payments



See what we can do for your
business or request a live demo
[OFX.com/business](https://www.ofx.com/business)