

Search Defence

Search

Defence (<http://defence.gov.au>)

Ministers (<https://www.minister.defence.gov.au>)

Navy (<http://www.navy.gov.au>)

Army (<http://www.army.gov.au>)

Air Force (<http://www.airforce.gov.au>)



**Australian Government** (<http://defence.gov.au>)  
**Department of Defence**

## (/) Department of Defence Ministers

[Home \(/\)](#)   [Releases ▾ \(/news-media\)](#)   [Previous Ministers \(/previous-ministers\)](#)

[\(/news-media/statements\)](#)

[Home \(/home\)](#) / [Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds CSC \(/minister/lreynolds\)](#)

/ [Media releases \(/minister/lreynolds/media-releases\)](#)

/ [Morrison Government equipping Navy with cutting edge intelligence capability \(/minister/lreynolds/media-releases/morrison-government-equipping-navy-cutting-edge-intelligence\)](#)

# Morrison Government equipping Navy with cutting edge intelligence capability

23 March 2021

**Issued by Senator the Hon Marise Payne, Acting Defence Minister**

**Joint media release**

- **The Hon Melissa Price MP, Minister for Defence Industry**

The Morrison Government is boosting the Royal Australian Navy's intelligence capability through Defence's Maritime Unmanned Aircraft System Continuous Development Program.

The Program has reached a new milestone following the selection of five respondents to progress to the next phase of the procurement process.

The Acting Minister for Defence, Senator the Hon Marise Payne today announced that BAE Systems Australia, Insitu Pacific, Northrop



Grumman Australia, Raytheon Australia, and Textron Systems Australia had been shortlisted for Block One of SEA129 Phase 5.

“This Program will acquire maritime unmanned intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and targeting aircraft systems which will complement current sensors and systems on Navy’s ships, while boosting a ship’s area of surveillance,” Minister Payne said.

“Today’s milestone is a result of the Morrison Government’s unprecedented \$270 billion investment in defence capability over the next decade, which is equipping the Australian Defence Force with world-class, cutting edge capability.”

Block One of the program is the first phase of a 30-year continuous development program, with five-year rolling block upgrades, which will incorporate new technology upgrades.

Minister for Defence Industry Melissa Price said the project was delivering on the Morrison Government’s commitment to maximise Australia’s defence industry involvement in the acquisition, operation and sustainment of defence capability.

“By incorporating new technology through block upgrades every five years, the program supports the development of Australia’s Unmanned Aircraft System industry, and provides the Navy with a leading edge maritime surveillance capability,” Minister Price said.

“This process will allow Australian businesses to be directly involved in providing greater situational awareness for the Fleet, in particular the new Arafura Offshore Patrol Vessels, while strengthening long-term job growth and security.”

Future opportunities will be available in forthcoming Blocks of SEA129 Phase 5 from 2024.

(/minister/lreynolds)

Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds CSC

(/minister/lreynolds)

Minister for Defence

Media contacts

Nicky Hamer (Minister Reynolds’

Office): [+61 437 989 927](tel:+61437989927)

(<tel:+61437989927>).

Defence Media:

[media@defence.gov.au](mailto:media@defence.gov.au)

(<mailto:media@defence.gov.au>).

---

[Biography](#) (/minister/lreynolds) |

[Media releases](#) (/minister

/lreynolds/media-releases) |

[Speeches](#) (/minister/lreynolds

/speeches) | [Statements](#)

(/minister/lreynolds/statements) |

[Transcripts](#) (/minister/lreynolds

/transcripts)

---

More releases

---

**ADF supporting NSW flood emergency**

(/minister/lreynolds

/media-releases/adf-

supporting-nsw-flood-

emergency)

23 March 2021

---

**Morrison Government and Naval Group secure a win for Australian Industry**

(/minister/lreynolds

/media-releases/morrison-

government-and-naval-

group-secure-win-

australian-industry)

23 March 2021

---

**Demonstrating Australia's Enduring Commitment to the Indo-Pacific Region**

(/minister/lreynolds

/media-releases

/demonstrating-australias-

**enduring-commitment-  
indo-pacific-region)**

15 March 2021

---

**Infantry Fighting Vehicle  
contenders unveiled  
(/minister/lreynolds  
/media-releases/infantry-  
fighting-vehicle-  
contenders-unveiled)**

12 March 2021

---

**Enhanced infrastructure  
for the Vanuatu Police  
Force (/minister/lreynolds  
/media-releases  
/enhanced-infrastructure-  
vanuatu-police-force)**

11 March 2021

---

---

Defending Australia and its National Interests



Contact us (<http://defence.gov.au/Contacts>)      Copyright (<http://defence.gov.au/Copyright.asp>)  
Disclaimer (<http://defence.gov.au/Disclaimer.asp>)      Privacy (<http://defence.gov.au/Privacy.asp>)  
Accessibility (<http://defence.gov.au/Accessibility.asp>)      Sitemap (<http://defence.gov.au/Sitemap.asp>)  
Error/bug (<mailto:InternetWebmaster@defence.gov.au>)