

27 February 2026

AUKUS Community Taskforce
Locked Bag 3001
WEST PERTH WA 6872



Chamber of Commerce
and Industry WA

T: (08) 9365 7555
E: membership@cciwa.com
W: www.cciwa.com

Via email: Magenta.Marshall@mp.wa.gov.au

CC: admin@dpc.gov.au

Dear Mrs Marshall,

AUKUS Community Taskforce Submission

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia (CCIWA) is the peak body advancing trade and commerce in Western Australia.

We represent over 7,000 businesses of all sizes and in all sectors, including defence, health and community services, housing, energy, resources, and manufacturing. We are committed to using our insights to develop and advocate for public policies that will help realise our vision of making WA the best place to live and do business.

CCIWA appreciates the opportunity to share our members' views on the opportunities and challenges associated with the AUKUS program within the community.

AUKUS represents a once in a generation strategic and economic opportunity with its impacts extending beyond the defence industry into the broader economy and community. It is the beginning of a decades-long relationship, with huge potential if the foundational settings are right. Therefore, the development of enabling infrastructure and the provision of quality services, including, but not limited to, roads and public transport, housing, health and community services, community assets, and education, must occur alongside the development of defence assets.

This should be an immediate priority. The State Government must proactively champion defence in WA, building community confidence in the strength of the industry in WA and facilitating diversification of the WA economy. In consultation with members, we provide the following for consideration.

Roads and Public Transport

AUKUS will represent higher volumes of traffic in Rockingham over time, resulting in more economic activity in the area and more stress on transport infrastructure.

While CCIWA acknowledges the commitment to upgrade key entrances into the Kwinana Strategic Industrial Area, the State Government must work with industry to ensure that land access is truly fit-for-purpose. Roads must be efficient and public

transport must effectively service the area to optimise accessibility and encourage businesses to locate in the region.

With surrounding roads nearing pragmatic capacity, the State Government must further consider and commit to targeted development of road infrastructure in the area to meet projected long-term demands. This includes exploring dedicated defence road infrastructure to connect Garden Island with existing logistics networks and Perth's industrial areas, and a logistics hub close to defence operations to facilitate efficient and secure deliveries.

To develop this infrastructure, the Government should explore funding models that involve private partnerships to enable timely assessment, construction, and operationalisation aligned with industry needs. We urge consultation with industry, to ensure the networks are fit-for-purpose and achieve the intent of removing defence and freight off residential streets.

Housing and accommodation

Significant work is still required to ensure adequate housing close to defence and defence-related operations. In particular, members raised concerns that not enough planning is occurring within the region for housing and accommodation.

The workforce will see an estimated 6,500 minimum jobs – but this does not factor in visitation from AUKUS allies, families, and migration to the south metropolitan region. CCIWA recommends that the State Government:

- continue to work with the private sector to identify innovative solutions to address tight housing supply and deliver fast-tracked accommodation solutions.
- identify total infrastructure requirements, including housing, for the AUKUS workforce in the south metropolitan region and immediately action reforms to address needs.
- undertake a comprehensive review of State Government land and building holdings to identify unused sites for housing development around Rockingham.
- identify and address the various policy and regulatory barriers (e.g., environmental) that are causing bottlenecks in the release of greenfield sites and housing, including planning reform.
- liaise with the Commonwealth Government to ensure that temporary accommodation, such as hotels, can be financed appropriately.

The growth of AUKUS activities around Rockingham will be facilitated by the growth of defence industry businesses who co-locate with defence operations. An appropriately skilled workforce must be attracted to work for these businesses, and one lever Government must consider is effective housing solutions that enable the workforce to live close to work.

Health and Community Services

Another lever that Government must pull to attract a workforce to the area surrounding AUKUS activities is the provision of effective and efficient health and community services.

As CCIWA has advocated previously, the State Government should work with industry to identify a timely solution to critical infrastructure bottlenecks, including the use of Private-Public Partnerships to reduce the cost on taxpayers and incentivise buy-in from private industry where feasible. This may also apply to infrastructure like hospitals and childcare centres.

While this represents an opportunity for collaboration between the private and public sectors, the private sector must not be expected to move on its own to provide these services. Government must lead investment and demonstrate a long-term commitment to developing the area to support AUKUS and other future defence activities.

Community Assets

To attract an AUKUS workforce and develop defence industry, WA must be the best place to live and do business. The Government should conduct a program to identify community asset infrastructure to make Rockingham attractive to workforces and families.

The Government must lead investment in community assets by balancing investment in community assets with investment in developing industry infrastructure and support for defence industry.

Education

CCIWA acknowledges the commitments already made, but more can be done to prepare WA for defence industry employment. Aligned with CCIWA's [Thinking Ahead](#) education report, we recommend the State Government:

- connect industry with South Metropolitan TAFE and all WA universities to ensure that tertiary courses are future-ready for both pillars of the AUKUS agreement. This should include coordination of a joint operation between institutions to ensure commerciality of qualifications that are critical to defence.
- work with WA universities to secure future Commonwealth Supported Placements for nuclear science and engineering.
- develop a holistic workforce plan for the education sector to ensure the right mix of appropriately skilled education staff, at all levels of education.
- launch a targeted program to upskill trade-qualified employees, so they can provide practical placements.
- provide a program to support the reskilling and upskilling of workforces to ensure their readiness for AUKUS activities.
- support schools in the area to have good links between education outcomes and employment, through better connection to industry, with the aim to build expertise in defence industry.

- establish a centralised online hub to connect the skills in the community to roles in defence industry and inform WA about AUKUS.
- facilitate diverse groups to train for and enter the AUKUS workforce, including people with disability and those requiring flexible learning and working arrangements.

Additional Comments

Through engagement with our members, CCIWA has additional recommendations to ensure that WA maximises the AUKUS opportunity. The State Government should:

- clearly communicate with industry the long-term investment plans in AUKUS. The lack of clarity to date has made businesses hesitant to establish themselves in Perth's south-west to support AUKUS activities.
- facilitate inter-agency coordination of planning and action to ensure that development is focused on the long-term horizon, enabling the WA community to meet defence needs into the future.
- develop defence industry by assessing and freeing up industrial land. This will help to deliver turnkey industrial hubs that fit defence industry operations, informed by engagement with industry. A key focus should be to enable decentralised production in Perth's industrial hubs to reduce competing land requirements immediately next to Henderson.
- create clear economic trade zones that encourage industry to invest and scale in support of AUKUS, similar to the Australian Marine Complex.
- enable businesses of all sizes to enter AUKUS supply chains by continuing Defence and AUKUS readiness grants, broadening applicability.

The Taskforce should play a role in increasing understanding of AUKUS needs and preparedness in the local community, and assist the State Government through representations in Canberra, London, and Washington. This will build confidence in the delivery of AUKUS, particularly for financial and research institutions.

Concluding remarks

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. The perspectives of defence industry businesses, who will enable AUKUS activities in the region, must be given due consideration. Should you wish to discuss the content of this letter further, please do not hesitate to contact me, via email at [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Dr Daniel Kiely
Chief Economist