



PERISCOPE VIEW

Patron: Admiral Sir James Perowne KCVO KBE
President: Commodore Jim Perks CB

**The Newsletter of the Barrow-in Furness Branch
 Submariners Association**

Issue No: 308

www.submarinersassociation.co.uk

March 2026



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COVER PHOTO – HMS ANSON ARRIVES IN AUSTRALIA

“Nothing in the world, nothing that you may think or dream of, or anyone may tell you, no arguments however specious, no appeals however seductive, must lead you to abandon that naval supremacy on which the life of our country depends.”

WINSTON SPENCER CHURCHILL

EDITORIAL MARCH 2026

Hello Everybody

Here is your March Branch Monthly Newsletter -on time this Month!! This issue includes an update from Vice Admiral Peter Wilkinson on the current situation with The Submarine Family – just in case you were wondering what was going on with it. I have also included details of an RN Temporary Memo on the arrangements and the organised events for the 125th Anniversary of the Submarine Service. This was originally issued back in January and was, I understand, circulated by the National Secretary to all Branches – only I hadn't seen it anywhere and only found out about it by accident when talking to a colleague. It includes a new Logo to be used for all 125th Anniversary purposes and I have included it at the end of this Newsletter – replacing the Submarine Family Logo. There are a couple of articles about the AUKUS Submarine programme including HMS ANSON's deployment to Australia and the Australian Government's plans for development of the Shipyard at Osborne near Adelaide in South Australia. This will have similar facilities to the Barrow Shipyard but with the addition of a Graving Dock. A French 'SUFFREN' Class SSN has recently visited Faslane so I have included a report on the visit. This month's 'Crossed the Bar' List is very small (only two names) after the very long lists of the last few months but it does include – John Harlow – one of the Association's WWII Veterans and a Centenarian

A reminder that if you hope to win in Alex's 'Monthly Member's Draw' remember that you have to be at the Monthly Meeting. In the off chance that your name gets drawn out and you are not there - then hard luck! You don't get anything and it rolls over to the next month but - there again, you might get lucky with one of Alex's Scratch Cards – you just need to pick the right Submarine's Name - I did at the October 2025 meeting and some Members have won on more than on occasion so it does work – thanks Alex!

The March 2026 Branch Meeting will be held in the Concert Room at the Royal British Legion at 1930 on Tuesday 3rd March. I hope you will all be able to attend the Branch Meeting and support the Committee and the Members. Meanwhile, hopefully, you will find something interesting to read and enjoy in this Issue.

Best Regards,
Barrie

SECRETARY'S REPORT – MARCH 2026

Hello all,

We received a request from Alison Robertson via our website, Alison was asked by a representative of a museum in Poland for advice on how to attach a WW2 naval lanyard and scarf to a WW2 naval jumper and square rig collar. Well, after much searching for information, we found a photograph showing this detail which we then sent to her, Alison was very pleased with this information and thanked us for our input.

On behalf of Craig Weir, Chairman of the Northeast Branch, we have sent out email invitations to our Branch Members for their Trafalgar Dinner on the 17th of October to be held in the vault at the Rum Experience, Whitehaven. Partners are invited, the cost is £40 per head and they are planning to dine up to 60 on the night, numbers will be made up from RNA Tyne and Calliope. So, if you are interested in going, please let me know.

The Northeast Branch are also setting up an exhibit in Blyth Battery which we are looking to loan them some of our artefacts. Here is some background from Craig:

The memorabilia is for Blyth Battery which is a Coastal Defence gun battery and which has been turned into an Army Museum. We were asked to put a submarine exhibit in there last year to commemorate the links with Blyth of the 6th Flotilla. It proved to be very successful and increased the footfall so we decided we would enhance it with more "stuff"! It would be interesting to come to Barrow to see if we could use some of your stock.

The Secretaries Zoom meeting for February was held while I was on holiday so it was agreed that Steve May would be asked to attend in my absence. Steve was happy to stand in and to also ask a question from David Smith on behalf of our Branch.

Question:-

'Can the SAC clearly state that if the SA formally adopts Charity Status, all individual Branch funds will not be subject to the Governance Requirements of the Charities Commission's Rules on spending? '

It is understood that any expenditure by the SAC of the National Funds would be.

Response:-

"Branches will NOT be a Charity and therefore not come under the restrictions of the Charities Commission and will remain to operate as we currently do independently"

It was also stated that Craig Fulton, an ex-Skipper from HMS SCEPTRE will be coming along to the AGM to do a brief about becoming a Charity, he completed a degree in the subject after leaving the Mob. He has previously assisted and advised other groups to become charities so it will be interesting to see what he has to tell us.

Finally, the Duke of Lancaster's Regimental Association have invited our Branch Members to attend the St. George's Day parade on Sunday the 26th of April 2026.

The format of the parade is as follows:

11.30am form up at the Town Hall

11.45am Presentation of red roses to the Standard Bearers by the Mayor of Barrow

12.00 Noon, Standard Bearers take post, the parade marches to St. George's church to attend a short service.

13.15pm (approx.): The parade marches from St. George's Church to Atkinsons car park for dismissal.

All are welcome to meet at the Royal British Legion on Holker Street for refreshments.

Replies to your attendance can be made to Derek Phillips email (deggs1sky.com) or mobile (07592754981)

Yours aye,

Julian (Jules) Talks

barrow.sa.secretary@gmail.com

SOCIAL SECRETARY REPORT - MARCH 2026

Hi Everybody

February what a great month, my birthday and of course our first footing adventure to breezy Morecambe Bay to meet up with the Jim and his gang. Another full bus, thank goodness for that, otherwise the coach would have cost the branch a little more than it did. Again, another fantastic meet up with our good friends, a good meeting, lots of rum, good food, lots of rum and even a karaoke thrown in and lots of rum.

I have just about finalised the program for this year and it is attached below:

I will not be at the meeting in March, am away visiting my family, but we have our annual trip down to Plymouth the weekend of the 6th – 8th to meet up with those guys and it just keeps getting bigger and better thanks to Grant & Julie Fox's great efforts.

Followed the next weekend by the Buddies in Boats here in Barrow; this is a good weekend, again, meeting up with many friends and raising cash for good causes. All details for this are held by Lee Marshall.

If you are going to the AGM in Liverpool give them my best and have a great weekend.

The Members' Draw was won in February by Big Mac so stands at £20 for the March meeting (but given I won't be there) this will roll over to April's meeting.

Yours Aye

Alex

NOTE: A Copy of Alex's 2026 Social Calendar is on Page 12

MARCH BRANCH CALENDAR

Branch Meeting	Tues 3 rd Mar
Committee Meeting	As Required

APRIL BRANCH CALENDAR

Branch Meeting	Tues 7 th Apr
Committee Meeting	As Required

MAY BRANCH MEETING

Branch Meeting	Tues 5 th May
Committee Meeting	As Required

MARCH BRANCH BIRTHDAYS

J (Jean) Brumby (A)	01/03/1948*
K (Kath) Talks (A)	03/03/1963*
Maxwell Park-Davies	05/03/1995*
T.R. (Charlie) Henshaw	05/03/1946*
R. (Bob) Arthur	07/03/1948*
J. (John) Duffy	13/03/1959*
J (Joshua) Millward	14/03/1997*
J. W. (Jeff) Bennett	18/03/1964*
P. (Paul) Hoodles	26/03/1979*
C. (Christine) Hartlebury(A)	30/03/1953*
Jean Frame (A)	31/03/1952*

Happy Birthday All!!

DISCLAIMER

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expressed in this Newsletter but encourages publication as a matter of interest.

Nothing printed may be construed as policy or an official announcement unless so stated. Otherwise, the Association accepts no liability on any issue in this Newsletter.

SUBMARINE COMMISSIONING CREW LISTS

Do you have any? Submarine Commissioning, Paying Off, De-commissioning and Re-dedication Crew Lists – are still wanted, thank you very much. These Crew Lists are required for an ongoing project to compile a Chronological Record of Submariners. If you don't have any Crew Lists and you wish to be added to the Record you can always send me your individual details - where and when joined boats, rank or rate, boats served in - with dates if known – Official Numbers are always helpful as well.

I am looking for 'First Commission' Crew Lists as follows: PORPOISE, GRAMPUS, CACHALOT, WALRUS, OBERON, ONYX, ORPHEUS, ODIN, OTUS, UNICORN, AUDACIOUS and ANSON. Also looking for copies of Crew Lists for subsequent Commissions of any 'O' Class, 'P' Class or Nuclear Boat – SSN & SSBN. Crew Lists for any Commissioning or Decommissioning of any Diesel 'A,' 'S' or 'T' Class Boat refitting in Home Dockyards or in Malta, Singapore or Sydney are also required. Have a look through your records and 'Ditty Boxes' and see what you can find. You can contact me by E Mail, Snail Mail or Telephone

Thanks Barrie Downer

RESURGAM - REMEMBERING FORMER BARROW MEMBERS MARCH

Arthur Roberts	1990
William Farrell	1990
George Layden	2004
Hughie Short	2017
Henry Sibbitt	2019
Michael Dack	2020
Bob Pointer	2023

NEWSLETTER CONTACT INFO

Do you have a story to tell or have information you feel should appear in the Newsletter - then ring Barrie Downer on 01229 820963 or, if you wish to send me an article, my Postal Address is 'The Firs', Dundalk Street, Barrow Island, Barrow in Furness, Cumbria LA14 2RZ. You may also send your contribution by e-mail frozennorth55@gmail.com. Come on – every Submariner has a story to tell – some more than one! Let's see yours in print!

Constructive suggestions about the Newsletter are also very welcome. The Newsletter will be published in the last week of each month i.e., the last week in February for the March 2026 Issue. Also, please note that the SA National Newsletter 'In Depth' will be published on 1st April 2026 so, if you have anything for either Newsletter please ensure you have any information with me ideally by the 15th of the previous month to ensure its inclusion in the next issue. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition – keep them stories coming!

THE SUBMARINE FAMILY AN UPDATE

From Vice Admiral Wilkinson

23 January 2026

Dear Member of The Submarine Family,

Over the last 18 months or so representatives from The Submarine Family (TSF), We Remember Submariners (WRS), the Submariners Association (SA), the Friends of the Submarine Museum (Friends) and Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC), have been looking at the best way forward for TSF and the individual organisations that work with it.

The Chairs of these organisations agreed in 2025 that although this is not the right time for a full merger, they remain committed to working collaboratively. As a consequence, it has been decided that there will no longer be a separate membership system for TSF. The long-established membership organisations of WRS, SA and Friends will continue to provide membership options (see the details at the end of this letter) and, alongside

those, current TSF members can continue, should they so wish, to hear about the work of TSF by becoming TSF Supporters instead.

TSF will continue to give out money through the recently created Submarine Family (TSF) Grants Committee which met twice in 2025. The committee exists solely to support the Submarine Community and is administered by the RNRMC. Committee members include representatives from across the Submarine Service, ensuring that decision-making is rooted in a deep understanding of the needs of serving submariners, veterans, and their families. Any donations to TSF, as well as the £100k annual grant from the RNRMC, will be distributed by this committee. If you currently give a donation then you can continue to do so, knowing that your money is "ring-fenced" and supporting Submarine Family beneficiaries.

It is important to stress that TSF remains a dedicated fund focused entirely on serving submariners, veterans, and their families and provides a clear route for beneficiaries seeking support and for donors wishing to contribute specifically to the Submarine Community.

A new home for the Online Book of Remembrance (OBOR) is currently under construction, to be managed by Friends. TSF website has closed down with a new TSF page on the RNRMC website to share information about, both the grants given through TSF and providing signposting to the support which is available to members of the submarine community. Further ways to develop this exciting collaboration are being discussed with the Director and Deputy Director Submarines and it is hoped that a further announcement will be made later in the year as these plans are developed further.

I would now like to ask whether you wish to remain part of TSF as a supporter? If you are not a member already, you can also join one of the individual organisations (The Submariners Association, We Remember Submariners, and Friends of the Submarine Museum) as we enter this new chapter. Your continued involvement and support is hugely valuable and your voice remains essential as we work together to support submariners and their families, especially in 2026 as we celebrate 125 years of the Submarine Service. RNRMC's vision is a world in which our sailors, marines, and their families are valued and supported, for life. It is a real privilege to continue this important work on behalf of the Submarine Community.

VADM Peter Wilkinson

Chairman, The Submarine Family

A proud part of Royal Navy & Royal Marines
Charity

HMS ANSON HAS ARRIVED AT HMAS STIRLING

22nd February 2026

HMS ANSON arrived in Western Australia today to undertake the first-ever maintenance activity on a Royal Navy nuclear-powered submarine in Australia. The visit marks a significant milestone in AUKUS preparations and Australia's ambition to operate conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarines.

ANSON sailed from Gibraltar on 23 January and completed the 8,200 nautical mile non-stop transit over the course of a month at sea before entering HMAS STIRLING. Her entry to the base was slightly delayed by infrastructure set up for the annual Rottneest Channel Swim preventing transit through the channel, although the swim was eventually cancelled due to bad weather.

ANSON's direct passage to Australia dispels speculation that she might be diverted for Tomahawk land-attack operations in the Middle East. Political signals from London, including the Prime Minister's refusal to authorise the use of UK airbases for US strikes on Iran, underline the government's choice to avoid action in the region.

To many observers, the timing of the deployment to Australia appears extraordinary. With no other RN attack submarines available and a weakening surface fleet, while tensions with Russia continue to rise, sending the sole operational SSN to the other side of the globe invites scrutiny. The UK must honour its commitments under AUKUS, but in the near term, there is a legitimate debate about whether more immediate regional concerns should take precedence.

Positioning Britain's only available attack submarine so far from home waters risks appearing inconsistent with firm official messaging that any hostile act by Moscow will be met with strength and resolve. The small SSN force represents the UK's most potent conventional deterrent and most powerful asset to deter malign Russian underwater activity.

Over the coming weeks, around 100 personnel will work on the boat in a Submarine Maintenance Period (SMP). The effort brings together the RN, the UK Submarine Delivery Agency (SDA), the Royal Australian Navy (RAN), ASC Pty Ltd and specialists from Pearl Harbour Naval Shipyard. The activity represents the first time the UK has conducted such a maintenance period for one of its nuclear-powered attack submarines outside home waters.

This work builds directly on Australia's recent experience supporting USN Virginia-class boats, including USS HAWAII in 2024 and USS VERMONT in 2025. Each step incrementally develops the industrial skills, regulatory systems and supply chains necessary to sustain nuclear-powered submarines safely and routinely. HMS ASTUTE previously visited Australia in 2021, shortly after the AUKUS pact was agreed.

HMAS STIRLING will be the base for Submarine Rotational Force-West (SRF-West), under which US and UK nuclear-powered submarines will rotate through Western Australia on a persistent basis. Establishing the workforce, facilities and nuclear stewardship arrangements to support this presence is central to the credibility of AUKUS Pillar I.

Two RAN officers are currently embedded aboard HMS ANSON gaining first-hand operational experience in a conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine. More than 50 Australians are now embedded across the UK Defence Nuclear Enterprise, while the RN has delivered offshore nuclear safety training to over 950 personnel associated with the Australian Submarine Agency.

These exchanges illustrate that AUKUS is as much about people as platforms. Developing a cadre of experienced nuclear-qualified engineers, maintainers and operators will take years. ANSON's maintenance period accelerates this learning curve, exposing Australian personnel to the standards and procedures that underpin safe submarine operations.

During the visit, AUKUS partners are expected to conduct combined Pillar I and Pillar II activities, including testing the interoperability of the C2 Robotics 'SPEARTOOTH' Large Uncrewed Underwater Vehicle (LUUV) with HMS ANSON. In parallel, ASW artificial intelligence algorithms associated with AUKUS Pillar II will be assessed and refined using data from the Royal Australian Air Force P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft.

RNTM 09-007/25

HM SUBMARINES 125 YEARS OF SERVICE

Sponsor: Rear Admiral Submarines – RAdm A Perks MBE Andy.Perks260@mod.gov.uk

Liaison: NAVY SUBFLOT-WOSM – WO1 Neil Brownson Neil.Brownson107@mod.gov.uk

28 Jan 26

Introduction

1. The Submarine Service celebrates its 125th Anniversary in 2026 (SM125). A year-long series of commemorations will mark this milestone. Alongside our partners across the Defence Nuclear Enterprise, the Submarine Service will acknowledge our heritage, the role of the Submarine Service as the cornerstone of national defence, whilst looking confidently into the future. The centerpiece of these events will be a Gala Dinner at Windsor Castle, Sep 26.

Programme of Events

2. The schedule of commemorative events taking place throughout 2026 is at Annex A. Where necessary, separate RNTMs will be released promulgating further details for individual serials.

3. All personnel, whether serving, veterans or members of the wider Defence Nuclear Enterprise are encouraged to fully participate in SM125. Volunteers to help support and deliver events are welcomed.

Coordination

4. SUBFLOT are responsible for the coordination of activity associated with SM125. The email address NAVY SUBFLOT-EVENTS (MULTIUSER) should be used for all matters relating to SM125 activity.

5. Any personnel interested in producing SM125-themed ‘gizzets’ or using SM125 branding on commemorative products are required to contact NAVY SUBFLOT-EVENTS (MULTIUSER). Support will be provided to ensure maximum visibility of any SM125-themed products whose proceeds support RNRMC/The Submarine Family or other military charities.

Communication

6. Royal Navy Communications and Influence have developed a media plan in support of SM125. They will also provide additional support for specific commemorative events where required. Units and individuals should take every opportunity to reference SM125 in internal and external messaging. This includes routine outputs such as newsletters, briefs, social media posts and stakeholder updates. Key messages, and a brief precis of the history of the Submarine Service, is at Annex B. These messages are the cornerstone of discussing SM125 in any external and internal communications.

7. The official SM125 branding badge is provided at Annex C. The badge should be prominently featured in presentations, event materials and digital content to create a unified and recognisable brand for the anniversary. Digital copies of SM125 branding are available via NAVY SUBFLOT-EVENTS (MULTIUSER).

8. Cancel this RNTM, 31 Dec 26.

Annexes:

A. SM125 Programme of Events

B. SM125 Key Messages

C. SM 125 Logo

Annex A to

RNTM 09-007/25

Dated 28 Jan 25

SM125 Programme of Events

1. The schedule of events commemorating SM125 is outlined below. Further information concerning booking and agenda will be published separately. Enquiries regarding events should be directed to NAVY SUBFLOT-EVENTS (MULTIUSER) in the first instance.

Event	Date	Location	Lead
K13 Memorial weekend	23/24/25 Jan 26	HMNB Clyde / Govan	Submariners Association
SA National reunion including 125th Anniversary gala dinner	21-22 Mar 26	Liverpool	Submariners Association
Gambit Dinner	26 Mar 26	HMNB Devonport	SUBFLOT
SM 125 Affiliates Gala Dinner	22 Apr 26	HMNB Clyde	SUBFLOT
SM Conference	23 Apr 26	HMNB Clyde	SUBFLOT
Dunoon Memorial weekend	01-3 May 26	03 May 26	Submariners Association
RASM Conference / Dinner (OF5 & above)	14 May 26	Regents Park Barracks, Guildhall	SUBFLOT
We Remember Submariners National Arboretum Event	17 May 26	National Arboretum	We Remember Submariners
CNE26 including SM125 Gala Dinner	19-21 May	Farnborough Exhibition Centre	SUBFLOT
SM Service Presentation to the City of London	24 Jun	Mansion House, London	Livery of the Tin Plate Workers
International Submariners Memorial	TBC Sep 26	Dundee	International Submariners

			Association
Windsor Castle SM 125 Gala Dinner	TBC Sep 26	Windsor	SUBFLOT
SM 125 Thales gala dinner	02 Oct 26	Govan	Thales
Submarine Awards 26	TBC Oct 26	Glasgow	SUBFLOT
Oardacious, Trafalgar Night	22 Oct 26	Greenwich Painted Hall	Oardacious
Annual Remembrance Parade and Service	31 Oct-1 Nov 26	London	Submariners Association

Annex B to RNTM 09-007/25 Dated 28 Jan 25

SM125 Key Messages

The following are the key messages and should be used in the context of SM125.

Submarine Service History

Royal Navy Submarine Service was officially established in 1901 with the commissioning of HMS HOLLAND 1, marking the beginning of Britain's undersea warfare capability. Initially viewed with scepticism, submarines quickly proved their strategic value during World War I, where they were used for reconnaissance and offensive operations against enemy shipping. By the end of the war, the submarine had evolved from a coastal defence vessel into a formidable weapon of naval warfare.

During World War II, the Submarine Service played a critical role in disrupting Axis supply lines, particularly in the Mediterranean. Post-war, the introduction of nuclear propulsion in the 1960s transformed the service, enabling submarines to remain submerged for months and carry ballistic missiles as part of the UK's nuclear deterrent. Today, the Submarine Service remains at the heart of Britain's defence strategy, operating advanced nuclear-powered submarines that provide stealth, endurance and global reach.

Key Messages

- Since the commissioning of HOLLAND 1 in 1901, the Submarine Service has remained at the forefront of innovation, resilience and operational excellence safeguarding the nation beneath the waves.
- HM Submarine Service remains a cornerstone of national security and a symbol of professionalism and dedication. This anniversary is not only a celebration of history but a reaffirmation of the values that define the Royal Navy today.
- SM125 events unite our community, inspire the next generation, and showcase our enduring role in national security for decades to come. They recognise not just the contribution of the sailors who serve beneath the waves, but the support provided by generations of dockyard workers, engineers and civil servants who today constitute the Defence Nuclear Enterprise, all of whom provide critical support to the front-line.
- SM125 also recognises the support and sacrifices of the families of our submariners, who have provided their unfailing support to the Royal Navy Submarine Service. From early diesel-electric boats to today's nuclear-powered fleet, the Submarine Service has consistently demonstrated technological leadership and operational excellence.
- The seventh and final Astute Class SSN (HMS ACHILLES) will be launched in 2028. The Dreadnought Class is already in build and will swiftly follow to start relieving the Vanguard Class SSBNs of their duties. SSNA is already in development and will replace the Astute Class SSN. These new submarines are being jointly developed with Australia and the US in a first-time defence deal for the UK.

Press release Published 27 February 2026

His Majesty The King visits Northwood Headquarters

His Majesty The King today visited the Northwood military headquarters in north-west London, paying tribute to the dedication and service of personnel, whose 24/7 work keeps the UK and its allies safe.

From:

Cyber & Specialist Operations Command & Ministry of Defence



HM with Air Marshal Suraya Marshall, Deputy Commander CSOC and Lt Gen Nick Perry, Chief Joint Operations

(MOD Copyright)

- His Majesty The King makes his first visit as monarch to the UK's top operational military headquarters.
- Military personnel and civil servants showcase their round-the-clock work to keep the UK and our allies safe.
- The visit reaffirms the enduring and close relationship between the Crown and the United Kingdom's Armed Forces.

Northwood HQ is the nerve centre of UK defence, directing military operations across the globe. Home to the UK's joint headquarters, as well as NATO's Allied Maritime Command, His Majesty The King met with soldiers, sailors, aviators, and civil servants from the UK and NATO allies who are always on; co-ordinating joint and combined military activities around the clock.

His Majesty met with personnel across the site, including the team who recently oversaw the UK's Carrier Strike Group deployment to the Indo-Pacific, as well as those who play a vital role supporting Ukraine. The visit comes as the war in Ukraine enters its fifth year, with the UK standing to support Ukraine for as long as it takes.

His Majesty was welcomed by the Deputy Commander of Cyber & Specialist Operations Command (CSOC), Air Marshal Suraya Marshall, before being shown the operational control rooms from which all live overseas operations are managed.

Northwood, which was originally home to the RAF Coastal Command during the Second World War, is home to key military commands, including the UK's most recently established Four Star Military Command - Cyber & Specialist Operations Command (CSOC), as well as the Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ), Allied Maritime Command (MARCOM), and the Royal Navy's Maritime Operations Centre (MOC). Together, they provide critical specialist capabilities working in alliance, to keep the UK secure at home and strong abroad.



HM with staff of PJHQ (MOD Copyright)

Air Marshal Suraya Marshall, Deputy Commander CSOC, said:

His Majesty's visit means a great deal to everyone here at Northwood HQ.

As one of the most strategically significant military headquarters for the UK and NATO, the work carried out here - day and night, at home and overseas - is critical to the security of the United Kingdom and our allies. To have that work recognised at the highest level is a tremendous honour.

The visit recognised the dedication and professionalism of the servicemen and women, civil servants and contractors based at Northwood, and the vital importance of the work they do every day in the service of the nation.

UK commits to building one new British Navy AUKUS nuclear attack submarine every 18 months

By Mawsel Marc 14th February 2026



Under a new defence blueprint, Britain is locking itself into a relentless rhythm of nuclear submarine construction, tying domestic industry, allied strategy and Indo-Pacific security into one long production line.

Britain signs up to an 18-month nuclear submarine drumbeat

The UK Strategic Defence Review 2025, released by Parliament on 24th November 2025, sets a striking target: one new nuclear-powered attack submarine for the Royal Navy every 18 months.

This is not a short-term surge. Officials say the tempo is intended to run into the late 2040s, supporting a fleet of up to 12 attack submarines built under the AUKUS SSN programme and shared between the UK and Australia.

The Royal Navy is moving to a continuous-build model, with a fresh AUKUS-class attack submarine leaving the yard roughly every year and a half.

The plan hinges on major expansions at two industrial anchors: BAE Systems' Barrow-in-Furness shipyard in Cumbria and Rolls-Royce's nuclear propulsion site at Raynesway in Derby.

What the AUKUS submarine pact actually means

The move sits inside AUKUS, the trilateral security partnership signed in 2021 by Australia, the UK and the United States.

- **Pillar I:** builds a shared fleet of nuclear-powered submarines for the Royal Australian Navy, backed by UK and US design and technology.
- **Pillar II:** covers a grab-bag of advanced capabilities, including AI, cyber, quantum tech, hypersonics and undersea systems.

The new SSN-AUKUS design, sometimes shortened to SSN-A, is the crown jewel of Pillar I. It will underpin both the future Royal Navy and Royal Australian Navy attack submarine forces and is intended to operate seamlessly alongside US Navy boats in the Indo-Pacific.

SSN-AUKUS is planned as a common design, blending British hull and propulsion expertise with US combat systems and vertical launch cells.

From Astute to AUKUS: a generational shift beneath the surface

The Royal Navy currently fields six Astute-class nuclear-powered attack submarines and four Vanguard-class ballistic missile submarines, which maintain the UK's Continuous At-Sea Nuclear Deterrence (CASD).

French nuclear attack sub arrives in Scotland

By George Allison - February 23, 2026

A French Navy nuclear-powered attack submarine has sailed into the River Clyde.

Images shared online show a Suffren-class boat on the surface, the newest in French service, with the first entering operational duty in 2020. It may be the same submarine whose previous visit to Scotland was reported by the UK Defence Journal recently, although that has not been confirmed. The French Navy declined to comment, as is customary in matters concerning submarine movements.

Built by Naval Group, the Suffren class replaces the ageing Rubis-class attack submarines and will form the backbone of France's conventional nuclear-powered undersea fleet. Six boats are planned, with three now in service.

At just under 100 metres in length and displacing more than 5,000 tonnes submerged, the submarines are powered by a K15 nuclear reactor driving a pump-jet propulsor. Speed is reported to exceed 25 knots. Like other nuclear-powered submarines, they are not limited by fuel range; patrol length is determined largely by provisions and operational requirements, typically around 70 days.

The class is equipped with Naval Group's SYCOBS combat management system and a Thales sonar suite incorporating hull-mounted, flank array and towed array systems, alongside mine and obstacle avoidance sonar. Electronic countermeasures are provided by the NEMESIS system.

Weapons are launched through four 533mm torpedo tubes, with space for up to 20 munitions. These include F21 heavyweight torpedoes, Exocet SM39 anti-ship missiles and the MdcN naval cruise missile, giving the boats a land-attack capability as well as anti-submarine and anti-surface roles. Mines can also be carried.

Faslane regularly hosts allied submarines, reflecting close operational ties between the Royal Navy and its NATO partners.

George Allison is the founder and editor of the UK Defence Journal. He holds a degree in Cyber Security from Glasgow Caledonian University and specialises in naval and cyber security topics. George has appeared on national radio and television to provide commentary on defence and security issues. Twitter: @geoallison

Denmark evacuates US submarine crew member off coast of Greenland

It came as Trump announced plans to deploy a hospital ship to the island

Anna Loren

Sunday 22 February 2026

Denmark's military has conducted an urgent medical evacuation of a United States submarine crew member off the coast of Greenland.

The operation, confirmed by the Danish Joint Arctic Command on its Facebook page, took place on Saturday about seven nautical miles (13 kilometres) from Nuuk, the capital of the vast, ice-covered island.

A Danish Seahawk helicopter, deployed from an inspection ship, retrieved the individual.

The crew member was subsequently transferred to a hospital in Nuuk for urgent medical treatment.

Also late on Saturday, President Donald Trump announced plans to deploy a hospital ship to Greenland, an autonomous territory of Denmark, alleging that many people there are sick and not receiving care!!

"Working with the fantastic Governor of Louisiana, Jeff Landry, we are going to send a great hospital boat to Greenland to take care of the many people who are sick and not being taken care of there. It's on the way!!!"

Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform, referring to his special envoy for Greenland.

The historically strong bilateral ties forged after World War II between Nato allies Denmark and the United States have come under severe strain in recent months.

Trump has ratcheted up talk of a possible US takeover of the mineral-rich and strategically located Arctic island, while Greenlanders have repeatedly said that the territory is "not for sale".

The president's Truth Social post prompted a defence of Denmark's healthcare system from the country's Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen.

She wrote on Facebook on Sunday, that she was "happy to live in a country where there is free and equal access to health for all - where it's not insurances and wealth that determine whether you get proper treatment".

"You have the same approach in Greenland," she wrote, before adding: "Happy Sunday to you all" in front of a blushing and smiling emoji.

Defence giant about to start work on new warship in Glasgow

By George Allison - February 18, 2026

BAE Systems has said preparations are well underway to begin construction of the sixth Type 26 frigate for the Royal Navy, HMS NEWCASTLE, with long-lead equipment already in progress.

The update was included in the company's full-year 2025 results, published on 18 February, as the defence giant reported record sales and a growing order backlog amid rising global defence demand.

In its results statement, BAE Systems said: "Preparations to start construction of the sixth Type 26 frigate, HMS NEWCASTLE are well underway with long-lead equipment items already in progress."

The Type 26 frigates are being built on the River Clyde in Glasgow, with work split between BAE's Govan and Scotstoun shipyards. The programme is intended to deliver eight advanced anti-submarine warfare frigates for the Royal Navy, forming a key part of the service's future surface fleet.

BAE Systems highlighted continued progress on the wider Type 26 programme, noting that final outfitting work is ongoing on HMS GLASGOW and HMS CARDIFF at Scotstoun, while HMS BELFAST, HMS BIRMINGHAM and HMS SHEFFIELD are progressing through construction at the company's Govan site.

The firm also pointed to recent investment in its Glasgow facilities, including the opening of the Janet Harvey Hall at Govan, a large, covered assembly facility designed to allow two Type 26 frigates to be built side by side. BAE Systems said the hall is already being used for work on HMS BELFAST and HMS BIRMINGHAM.

The company's results statement also highlighted the opening of its Applied Shipbuilding Academy in Glasgow, a £12 million training facility intended to support the long-term skills pipeline for warship construction on the Clyde.

BAE Systems' Chief Executive Charles Woodburn said the company remains well positioned to support defence demand, citing what he described as a "new era of defence spending" driven by escalating security challenges. BAE Systems reported sales of £30.6 billion in 2025 and said its order backlog rose to a record £83.7 billion.

Australia funds AUKUS long-lead nuclear systems

By Craig Langford - February 24, 2026

Australia has announced an AUS 310 million payment to acquire long-lead items from the United Kingdom for Australia's future conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarines under the AUKUS partnership.

The funding will support the manufacture of critical components for nuclear propulsion systems destined for Australia's first two SSN-AUKUS submarines, which are to be built at Osborne in South Australia. Under current arrangements, the United Kingdom will deliver complete, welded nuclear propulsion units for the Australian-built boats, with work already under way at Rolls-Royce Submarines in Derby. This adds to Australia's previously committed contribution of £2.4 billion over ten years to expand Rolls-Royce's production capacity.

Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Richard Marles said Australia continues to work closely with the United Kingdom and United States to develop the skills and industrial base required to operate nuclear-powered submarines.

"Early investment in components such as the nuclear propulsion systems will be critical to the delivery of AUKUS," Mr Marles said.

"By working with our AUKUS partners, the Albanese Government continues to support defence industry and workforce cooperation, which will in turn support jobs in Australia for generations to come."

The payment was announced alongside Minister for Defence Industry Pat Conroy's engagement at the Australia-United Kingdom Defence Industry Dialogue in London, the first such meeting since 2018. The talks focused in part on submarine industrial cooperation.

Mr Conroy said beginning work early on key submarine components was essential to maintaining programme momentum. "Starting work early on critical submarine components is essential to keeping this program on track. The next-generation SSN-AUKUS submarines will be an extraordinary capability, designed and built by trusted partners and powered by a company with decades of nuclear-propulsion experience," he said.

He added that Australia's investment was helping to establish a sovereign submarine-building capability. "Australia's investment is helping to lay the foundations for a sovereign capability that will keep Australians safe for decades to come. This is a concrete example of allied industrial capacity delivering real benefits for Australia."

The announcement follows the government's recent A\$3.9 billion commitment as a down payment for the new Submarine Construction Yard at Osborne, where construction of SSN-AUKUS boats is planned to begin before the end of the decade. At peak activity, at least 4,000 workers are expected to be employed in building the yard infrastructure, with around 5,500 direct jobs forecast for submarine construction in South Australia.

Craig Langford

Craig initially trained as a mechanical engineer, but after a brief and disillusioning stint designing ventilation systems, he pivoted to journalism

Building SSN-AUKUS: Australia's \$30bn Nuclear Submarine Yard at Osborne

Australia has just announced it will spend around AUS\$30bn (£15.6bn) to build a large nuclear submarine construction yard in Adelaide. The new facility at Osborne is intended to replicate the processes in use at BAE Systems' facility at Barrow. Vice Admiral Jonathan Mead, Director-General of the Australian Submarine Agency, has confirmed that British and American experts are already advising on the development of the expanded Osborne Naval Shipyard. The manufacturing system will be 'identical' to that used at Barrow-in-Furness shipyard and the two yards will build SSN-AUKUS boats in parallel. The yard is being delivered by Australian Naval Infrastructure (ANI), a government business enterprise established in 2017 to own, develop and manage

shipbuilding infrastructure. It will work closely with Defence, regulators and AUKUS partners to ensure nuclear safety and security standards are met. Construction is expected to span more than a decade.



British blueprint

Replicating Barrow’s approach means far more than similar buildings. It implies common production methodology, shared nuclear and quality standards, interoperable supply chains and a digitally integrated build environment. In effect, Australia is inserting a fourth production line into the AUKUS ecosystem, alongside Newport and Groton in the United States and at Barrow. The facilities in Cumbria are constrained by their Victorian legacy and complicated access, but by contrast, Osborne will be purpose-built to support modern submarine construction methods. Designed around digital shipbuilding principles, the layout is intended to optimise material flow, module movement and assembly sequencing from the outset. If delivered as planned, Adelaide could become one of the most advanced submarine production facilities in the world, rather than simply a southern hemisphere clone. SSN-AUKUS is a trilateral programme and industrial coherence will be essential if common design authority, shared supply chains and cross-national workforce mobility are to function effectively. A yard operating to the same production logic as Barrow reduces technical risk and enhances resilience across the enterprise.

Outline plan for the yard at Osborne, which has three distinct areas.



(Left) Area 1 – main fabrication hall and production facilities

(Centre) Area 2 blast and paint workshops

(Right) Area 3 consolidation hall, ship lift and graving dock

(Image: ANI).

Costs and benefits

The Australian government has committed an initial AUS\$3.9bn (£2bn) as a down payment. The scale is reflected in the physical footprint. Plans include a 420 metre-long fabrication hall requiring some 710,000 cubic metres of structural concrete, alongside facilities for testing and commissioning nuclear-powered submarines. (For context, the giant Devonshire Dock Hall in Barrow is 260m in length). Osborne already hosts infrastructure supporting the Collins-class boats and the Hunter-class frigate programme. The expansion will effectively triple the size of the

yard. Upgrades reportedly include a third ship lift and potentially a graving dock to the north of the site to support construction and sustainment of SSN-AUKUS. Once complete, the yard is expected to be one of only a handful globally capable of building large surface combatants and nuclear-powered submarines simultaneously.

For South Australia, already positioning itself as a defence manufacturing hub, the project represents a generational industrial commitment. The construction project will support around 10,000 jobs, and up to 1,000 apprentices per year will be trained on site.

SSN-AUKUS is central to the RN's future undersea posture and to sustaining the sovereign industrial base at Barrow. An Australian yard that truly mirrors UK processes should strengthen the overall programme. For the RN, whose own attack submarine fleet will transition from Astute to SSN-AUKUS over the 2030s, shared production architecture offers opportunities for collaborative problem-solving, distributed manufacturing and economies of scale. SSN-AUKUS is still being designed but they will be substantially larger than the Astute class and likely displace over 10,000 tonnes. They will be fitted with VLS cells, have X-form aft hydroplanes and be powered by PWR3 nuclear reactors made by Rolls-Royce in the UK.

Workforce challenge

Critics will immediately point to the slow pace of delivery of Astute and Dreadnought class at Barrow and wonder why Australia would want to follow the British model. To understand this better requires the long-term view that underpins AUKUS. Barrow is still dealing with legacy issues relating to strategic government failures dating back to the 1990s, which are slowly being addressed. The specialist submarine design skills gap that plagued the initial stages of the Astute class has been overcome – the development of Dreadnought has been smoother.

The extended construction and delivery times are largely down to a lack of skilled people, but between 2023-2027, the Barrow workforce should grow by about 5,000 people. This has been backed by a 'Team Barrow', a cross-government effort rarely seen in UK defence procurement, building a broader ecosystem required to grow and sustain a larger workforce. Australia will have to embark on a recruitment and training programme on an even larger scale.

It has been admitted that workforce expansion targets are currently behind schedule in the UK. It may take longer than hoped, but it does not invalidate the Barrow model as an example for Australia to follow. SSN-AUKUS is essentially a bilateral endeavour and there is little alternative but for Australia to deepen its partnership with the UK. Cost growth, schedule slippage and workforce bottlenecks remain risks for any nation navigating the complexities of nuclear submarine construction but can be gradually overcome with determination and solid political backing. In a controversial demonstration of the UK's unshakable commitment to AUKUS, in the next few weeks, HMS ANSON is due to arrive at HMAS Stirling in Western Australia. She will undertake a planned sustainment and maintenance period for about a month before commencing operations from the base as part of Submarine Rotational Force–West.

L3Harris wins major submarine comms contract

By George Allison

February 20, 2026

L3 Harris Technologies has secured its largest full-rate production contract for U.S. Navy submarine communications systems, receiving an award from General Dynamics Electric Boat to deliver 26 shipsets for Virginia- and Columbia-class submarines, the company stated.

Announced on 18 February 2026, the contract covers production for both submarine classes through 2033, with support potentially extendable to future Columbia-class boats and allied navies.

According to L3 Harris, the communications systems are designed to enhance situational awareness and connectivity for submarine crews while supporting the operational requirement for stealth.

Nino DiCosmo, President of Maritime, Space and Mission Systems at L3 Harris, said: "The ability for submarines to operate undetected is vital to the U.S. Navy's strategic advantage."

He added: "With decades of experience in submarine technology and in partnership with General Dynamics Electric Boat, L3 Harris will deliver highly reliable, undetectable communications systems to enhance operational effectiveness."

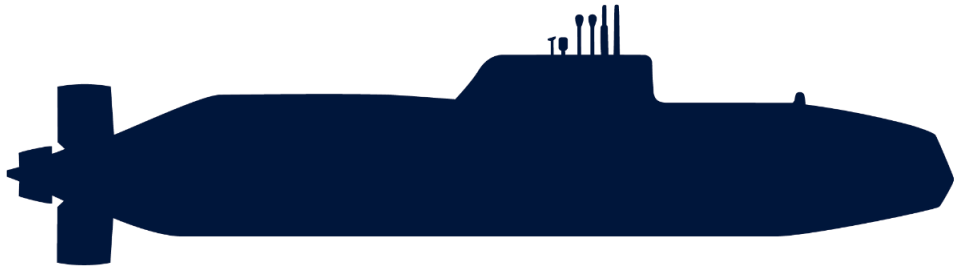
The company said the award builds on its longstanding involvement in U.S. Navy submarine programmes, including support for Ohio- and Los Angeles-class vessels.

The Virginia-class submarines are nuclear-powered fast-attack boats designed for operations in both littoral and deep-sea environments. The Columbia-class, currently under development, is intended to replace the Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines as the core of the United States' sea-based nuclear deterrent.



SM125

FROM HOLLAND 1 TO AGAMEMNON



125 YEARS OF
HM SUBMARINES

SUBMARINERS 'CROSSED THE BAR' REPORTED IN FEBRUARY 2026 (Information from all available sources)

Reported Via	Date CTB	Name	Rank/Rating	Official No.	Age	Submarine Service
Exeter Branch Member No. 3088	o/n 14th/15th February 2026	John E Harlow	Telegraphist (WT3)	C/JX 246457	101	Submarine Service from 1942 to 1948 in H43, H48 (Training), TRUCULENT, SEVERN, RORQUAL & TEREDO
We Remember Submariners	February 2026	Keith Adam	Chief Petty Officer (MEM) (L)	TBA	TBA	Submarine Service including 'V' Class & 'S' Class Boats & FOST

Barrow Submariners Association Social Planner 2026 (Mod 2)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Venue</u>
		January				July	
23rd - 25th	W/E	K13 Weekend	Helensburgh	25th	Sat	DTS	Askam
		February				August	
6th	Fri	First Footing	Morecambe			Race Day	Cartmel
		March		29th	Sat		
6th - 8th	W/E	SM2 Re-Union	Plymouth			September	
13th - 15th	W/E	BIBs Weekend	Barrow	19th	Sat	DTS West Shore Club	Walney
				20th	Sun	Battle of Britain Parade	Barrow
		April				October	
16th - 21st	W/E	Levante Re-Union	Benidorm	15th	Thur	DTS Hope & Anchor	Ulverston
				23rd	Fri	Trafalgar Night	Fairfield
24th - 26th	W/E	Dreadnought Re-Union	Barrow			November	
				8th - 10th	W/E	Remembrance Parades	Barrow
		May				December	
1st - 3rd	W/E	Vandal & Untamed	Dunoon			Christmas Party	Legion
16th - 18th	W/E	Arboretum Ceremony	Staffordshire	18th	Fri		
23rd	Sat	Jenk's Pub Crawl	Lakes	27th	Sun	DTS Seaweed Corner	Walney
29th - 31st	Sat	BIBs Weekend	Bridlington				
		June					
12th - 16th	W/E	Upholder Reunion	Malta				
27th	Sat	Armed Forces Parade	Barrow				

NOTES

1. Monthly Meeting 1st Tuesday of Month at 7:30pm
2. Meetings include: Rum Issue, Scratchcard, Members Draw & Snacks.
3. Prices of Events & Dress Code TBC.
4. Quiz Nights TBC Prior to Event.