

Defence Supplier Uplift Program Guide for Participating Primes

This guide has been prepared for, and in consultation with, key defence Primes involved in the various Supplier Qualification Programs that South Australian suppliers may undertake.

Background

The trilateral partnership between Australia, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States (US) (AUKUS) to deliver the Nuclear-Powered Submarine Optimal Pathway marks a transformative era for South Australia's defence industry.

This collaboration requires an increase in South Australia's industrial capacity and capability. This will position the state at the forefront of some of the most ambitious and technologically advanced naval shipbuilding and defence projects in Australia's history.

The uplift of submarine industrial capability is not only pivotal to supporting the Australian Government's continuous naval shipbuilding agenda but is also expected to drive the modernisation and expansion of Australia's two principal naval shipbuilding and sustainment precincts Osborne in South Australia and Henderson in Western Australia.

Recognising these opportunities, the South Australian Government is taking proactive steps to ensure local suppliers are well-prepared to seize new business prospects and to maximize international supply chain connections, particularly in areas where the state holds a competitive

advantage. The Department of State Development (DSD) is leading the Defence Supplier Uplift Program (the Program), working closely with industry partners to build the capabilities of South Australian suppliers.

Additionally, the Program recognises that the defence industry sector is evolving quickly, presenting further opportunities for South Australian suppliers within both Australian and international defence supply chains. Examples include (but are not limited to) Guided Weapons and Explosive Ordnance (GWEO), and military aircraft Manufacture, Repair, Overhaul and Upgrade (MRO&U).

The Program will open unprecedented commercial opportunities for South Australian industry, both within domestic and international markets, and through integration into US and UK major naval shipbuilding supply chains.

This expanded Program builds upon the achievements of the pilot Supplier Capability Uplift Program, which was delivered by DSD in partnership with Huntington Ingalls Industries Nuclear Australia (HII) during 2024-25. In that pilot, four South Australian companies were successfully onboarded as suppliers for HII's US Virginia Class submarine build program.

One of the primary objectives of the pilot was to demonstrate the value of establishing an in-country supplier qualification capability. This approach not only streamlines the onboarding process for domestic suppliers but also sets a solid foundation

for expanding access to other international partners and shipbuilding programs, thereby increasing export opportunities for South Australian businesses.

Supplier Qualification Programs

To qualify for the Program suppliers must first participate in a Supplier Qualification Program with a defence Prime.

Each Participating Prime independently determines and selects appropriate local suppliers for inclusion in their supplier and product qualification programs. DSD, Industry Capability Network SA, and Defence SA offer support to Primes in identifying capable local suppliers; however, they do not participate in final selection decisions and admission into a qualification program.

Each Participating Prime utilises its own distinct, proprietary supplier assessment process, undertaken at the discretion of each Participating Prime.

The assessment will typically include the identification and analysis of capability strengths and gaps, assessment of production capacity, and verification of the supplier's ability to meet specified performance, product specifications, commercial terms and quality standards.

The evaluation will pertain specifically to production activities at the supplier's South Australian facility.

Upon completion of the assessment, the Participating Prime will prepare and deliver a comprehensive Assessment Report (Report) to the supplier. The Report will contain recommendations for capability development and improvement initiatives directly applicable to the supplier.

South Australian suppliers may apply for matched grant funding under the Program to address these identified capability gaps. As part of the application process, suppliers will be required to provide a copy of their Report.

Following satisfactory implementation of the recommended capability improvements, the supplier may be considered by the Participating

Prime for progression to qualification and product qualification stages. This may enable them to receive and respond to Requests for Quote (RFQ) that may be issued in the future by the Participating Prime.

Refer to Figure 1 below illustrating how suppliers can progress from a Supplier Qualification Program, delivered by Participating Primes, to the Program funded by DSD.

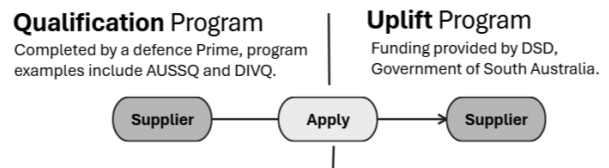


Figure 1, Supplier Qualification and Uplift Program.

Program Objectives and Overview

The objectives of the Program are to accelerate the qualification of South Australian suppliers into the supply chains of large-scale or multinational defence companies (Participating Primes), enabling them to compete for domestic and international defence opportunities.

The Program supports the participation of South Australian suppliers in Commonwealth defence industry Supplier Qualification Programs and Australian Industry Content requirements of Primes.

Local suppliers who complete a Supplier Qualification Program assessment may apply for matched grant funding under the Program to address the capability gaps required before onboarding as a qualified supplier.

Suppliers already working with Participating Primes domestically may also receive funding for international product qualification to support new export opportunities.



The Program aims to generate the following outcomes:

- increase defence export opportunities for local suppliers;
- increase South Australian industry participation in defence supply chains; and
- increase confidence in the AUKUS trilateral partnership.

Information for Applicants seeking uplift funding is detailed in the ***Defence Supplier Uplift Program Applicant Guidelines***.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Freedom of information

Participating Primes should be aware that all documents in the possession of the Government of South Australia, including those relating to this Program or any grant, are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1991 (SA)* (FOI Act). Information submitted in applications and all related correspondence, attachments and other documents may be made publicly available under the FOI Act.

The FOI Act gives members of the public a legally enforceable right to access documents – subject to certain exemptions – held by South Australian government agencies, local government authorities, statutory and regulatory bodies and South Australian universities.

Privacy and Information Policy

DSD complies with the South Australian Government's [Information Privacy Principles](#) (IPPS). DSD collects information (including personal information) as reasonably necessary for the purposes and functions of:

- administering our grants and funding programs.
- keeping you informed about the Program, relevant upcoming events, grant funding initiatives and outcomes, our services, special events or client feedback surveys, as well as our activities in general; and

- improving our websites and other services.

The collection and use of information extends to use of such information by the Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science for the purposes as outlined above.

If an Applicant believes that any information provided in their application is confidential or commercial-in-confidence, the Applicant must clearly identify such information and the reason for its confidentiality.

At the request of individual Primes, DSD can discuss non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) to protect any intellectual property, supplier assessment processes and other information that the Prime may deem to be sensitive in nature.

Contacts and Further Information

The Minister or their delegate may modify these guidelines and application terms, as necessary, at any time and has/have full discretion over the administration of the Program.

For further information and all Program and application enquiries, please contact:

Department of State Development
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