

Media Release – 17 January 2020

REPORT BY ANAO ON FUTURE SUBMARINE PROGRAM

Public statement from the Executive Director of the Submarine Institute of Australia (SIA), David Nicholls:

“The Submarine Institute of Australia (SIA) welcomes the independent audit performance report on the progress of the Future Submarine Program (or Attack class submarine program) released by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO), which is a valuable contribution to the management of significant expenditure on national security.

“The SIA’s core position is that during the transition from the Collins class submarines to the Attack class submarines, there must be no gap in Australia’s submarine capability.

“This includes ensuring there is no reduction in either the capability or availability of six submarines.

“This has become even more important given the recent deterioration in the strategic environment for Australia.

“The life-of-type extensions to the Collins class submarines are critical to maintaining an appropriate level of operational submarine capability for several years beyond the initial introduction of the Attack class submarines.

“The twin objectives of construction of the new Attack class submarines and the LOTE for the Collins class submarines is vital to ensuring no capability gap materialises during the transition.

“It is of concern that the Naval Shipbuilding Advisory Board questioned if proceeding with the Future Submarine Program was in the national interest, even if negotiations between the Australian Government and Naval Group for the new submarines were successful.

“The SIA continues to strongly support the construction of 12 new Attack class submarines based on the rigorous design process which is currently underway and an effective construction program in Australia.”

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