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Industrial uplift in Australia: DIVQ and how Australian Suppliers can support AUKUS through the Virginia Class Submarine program in the USA.

The March 2023 AUKUS announcement marked the most significant and complex industrial endeavour in Australian history; the acquisition of conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarines. **Phase 1** of the Optimal Pathway for this acquisition will accelerate the training and development of Australian personnel, including industry. This includes maintaining conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines of our AUKUS partners. The program will support Australian suppliers to participate in trilateral supply chains and establish a sovereign supply chain in Australia.

The Defence Industry Vendor Qualification (DIVQ) Program establishes a sovereign industrial base and supply chain capability in Australia, and is initially targeting qualification of Australian suppliers into the United States' submarine supply chain.

Australia's AUKUS Submarine Industry Strategy, launched by the Deputy Prime Minister, The Hon Richard Marles on 5 March 2025, sees the commencement of collaborative administration of DIVQ Wave 3 onward between the ASA and ASC, as the Sovereign Submarine Partner (SSP) for Sustainment. Through these activities, ASC are supported by General Dynamics Electric Boat, and Huntington Ingalls Newport News Shipbuilding.

The ASA continues to set the requirements and conditions for the successful uplift of Australian Industry to support development of a resilient trilateral submarine industrial base; key to successful delivery of the AUKUS Optimal Pathway. Since protecting the Collins class submarine supply chain is critically important to ASC, the DIVQ program is designed to uplift Australian suppliers while they are empowered to continue to deliver for Collins.

The DIVQ program supports Australian suppliers to understand, navigate and execute to the necessary quality, security, and resilience standards of our trilateral partners, and provides significant opportunities for Australian Industry. Together with the ASA, ASC continues working to remove barriers to participation, simplify regulation, and increase investment attractiveness to ensure Australian Industry are able to contribute to this critically important program.