

Australian Navy Submariners to Train on British Nuclear Submarines



Australian submariners will train on the new U.K. submarine HMS Anson. *U.K. MINISTRY OF DEFENCE*

LONDON – Royal Australian Navy submariners will join United Kingdom crews to train on the newly commissioned Astute-class nuclear-powered attack submarine HMS Anson, the U.K. Ministry of Defence said Aug. 31.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Defence Secretary Ben Wallace hosted new Australian Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles at Barrow to see the commissioning of the Anson.

The announcement came as Marles and Wallace emphasized the importance of the deep defense ties between the U.K. and Australia, following the development of the trilateral AUKUS partnership working with the United States, which was represented today by the U.S. Defense Attaché, Navy Capt. Leland.

Hosting Marles on his first official visit to the U.K. since the new Australian government came to power, the prime minister and ministers attended the commissioning of the fifth of seven new Astute-class Royal Navy submarines.

With naval capability at the center of the two powers' future

defense relationship, the visit reinforced the priorities of the Integrated Review and significance of the AUKUS partnership, which links the U.K., the United States and Australia in promoting stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

The U.K. and U.S. already have welcomed Royal Australian Navy personnel on its specialized nuclear training courses, and more will follow next year, before Australian submariners go to sea. The training and exchanges mark the beginning of a multigenerational naval partnership between the three AUKUS nations.

Marles, who is also minister for defense, visited Barrow, having also seen the Type 26 frigate shipbuilding facility in Govan, accompanied by the First Sea Lord, Adm. Sir Ben Key.

“Today is a significant milestone in the U.K. and Australia’s preparation to confront growing threats to the liberal democratic order, especially in the Indo Pacific,” said Wallace. “Not only have we progressed our defense planning but Minister Marles participated in the commissioning of our latest attack submarine, on which will Royal Australian Navy submariners will be embarked as we develop our shared capabilities in the years ahead.”

One of the most sophisticated underwater vessels ever built, HMS Anson represents £1.3 billion of U.K. investment. Capable of defending the U.K.’s interests at home and overseas, HMS Anson will be armed with up to 38 Spearfish Heavyweight Torpedoes and Block V Tomahawk land attack missiles, able to tackle targets at a range of up to 1,000 miles.

“HMS Anson is the cutting edge in submarine design and construction, ensuring operational advantage in the underwater battlespace, the last great stealth domain,” said Key. “Given the world we live in, there is no more important tool in the United Kingdom’s arsenal: silent, unseen, and a key instrument of our global, modern, ready Royal Navy.”

At 97 meters long, HMS Anson stands at around the length of two Olympic swimming pools, with 240 kilometers of cabling, enough to stretch from Barrow-In-Furness to its new home in Faslane, Scotland.

HMS Anson will remain in Barrow for the coming weeks while undergoing final checks and rigorous testing to the numerous complex systems that make up a nuclear-powered submarine, before sailing to HM Naval Base Clyde in Faslane to prepare for sea trials.

HMS Anson will join four other Astute Class submarines in service with the Royal Navy – HMS Astute, HMS Ambush, HMS Artful and HMS Audacious.

Two further boats – Agamemnon and Agincourt – are in various stages of construction at BAE Systems' Barrow-In-Furness site as part of £11.2 billion overall investment in the whole Astute-class program.