

CNO Visits Australia to Discuss Maritime Security, Continued Cooperation

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CANBERRA, Australia – Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Mike Gilday travelled to Canberra, Australia, Feb. 19-21, to meet with Royal Australian Navy (RAN) Chief Vice Adm. Mark Hammond, AM to discuss their shared commitment to maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Gilday met with other members of the Royal Australian Navy and discussed the two navies' shared focus on interchangeability, innovation, and combined operations.

The CNO had the opportunity to meet with U.S. Ambassador to Australia Caroline Kennedy, where they talked about the importance of advancing our bilateral and Navy-to-Navy relationships.

Additionally, Gilday met with Chief of the Australian Defence Force Gen. Angus Campbell, AO, DSC, and Commander of the Australian Defence College Air Vice Marshal Steve Edgeley.

"Australia is one of our oldest friends and most enduring Allies," said Gilday. "There is no daylight between how we see threats – we share a commitment of protecting and defending a free and open Indo-Pacific.

"I'm grateful to Admiral Hammond for his partnership and

teamwork as we continue to strengthen our navies' interchangeability," he added. "Our Sailors operate together around the globe, sailing together and participating in high-end maritime exercises—demonstrating our shared commitment to ensuring peace and prosperity throughout the Indo-Pacific."

The CNO visited the Australian Defence College, where he spoke with Royal Australian Navy, Army, and Air Force service members about the strategic importance of the enduring Alliance between Australia and the U.S.; the two navies working together to uphold the rules-based order; and strengthening partnership, advancing from interoperability to interchangeability.

Gilday and his wife Linda Gilday visited the Australian War Memorial, where the CNO laid a wreath during the time-honored Last Post Ceremony.

"I'm truly humbled by the opportunity to participate in such a meaningful ceremony," said Gilday. "Reflecting upon the sacrifices of servicemen and women who came before us serves as a reminder that our security and prosperity—and our friendships that uphold them—must never be taken for granted."

The U.S. and Australian navies share a mutual interest in maintaining freedom of navigation and adherence to the rules-based international order. They conduct frequent cooperative deployments, and regularly operate together during flagship theater exercises like Pacific Partnership, Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) and the Australian-led Kakadu. This year, the U.S. and RAN will participate in numerous exercises, to include: ANNUALEX, Sea Dragon, Pacific Partnership, Talisman Sabre, and Malabar, as well as many others.

This trip marked Gilday's third face-to-face meeting with Hammond, and his first visit to Canberra, Australia, as CNO.