First Royal Australian Navy Officer Graduates Engineering Duty Officer Basic Course under AUKUS Pillar 1

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PORT HUENEME, Calif. – A Royal Australian Navy Officer graduated for the first time from the U.S. Navy Engineering Duty Officer (EDO) School, during a ceremony at Naval Base Ventura County in Port Hueneme, Calif. on 7 Nov.

Royal Australian Navy (RAN) CMDR Stephen completed five weeks of training in support of the Australia, United Kingdom, United States (AUKUS) enhanced trilateral security partnership's Optimal Pathway that will establish a sovereign conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability within the RAN.

Engineering duty officers are an integral part of acquiring and maintaining the U.S. Navy's surface and sub-surface fleets. The Basic Course, which Stephen graduated from, provides the foundational knowledge through instruction on research and development, design, acquisition, construction, maintenance, and modernization of ships and systems. For Stephen, it was an experience unique to the U.S. Navy's training pipeline.

"The Basic Course introduces officers into the EDO community and provides the training needed to understand the principles associated with how the United States Navy designs, builds, maintains, and modernizes our warships," said Capt. Neil Sexton, EDO schoolhouse commanding officer. "I believe this course of study on acquisition and maintenance principles will

aid Stephen in being one of Australia's leading engineers for the sustainment of its future submarine fleet."

"The Royal Australian Navy does not have an EDO school," said Stephen, who is currently assigned to Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility as AUKUS' first Submarine Rotational Force – West liaison officer. "The knowledge I gained here will definitely enhance my Navy career moving forward and directly support Australia's SSN force."

A subordinate command under the Naval Education and Training Command (NETC), the school manages the continuum of training and, professional development opportunities, for the United State Navy's EDO community. The Schoolhouse is as a focal point for these officer's professional development, enabling EDOs to apply practical knowledge and experience to integrate science, technology and design into affordable ships and systems.

"As a career submarine operator, I know that our ships don't sail without the direct support of the EDO community," shared Rear Adm. Lincoln Reifsteck, AUKUS Integration & Acquisition Director. "Stephen's training at the Schoolhouse benefits the program and, ultimately, contributes to Australia's ability to maintain, operate, and support SSNs."

"I'm exceptionally proud of the EDO School's ability to support AUKUS and demonstrate its capabilities with one of our country's closest allies," said Vice Adm. James Downey, commander, Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) and the Navy's senior EDO. "Within NAVSEA, we are dedicated to delivering on our country's AUKUS commitments, to include training their civilian submarine maintainers at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard, creating opportunities to include our allies across the broad submarine design and maintenance portfolios."

There are more than 50 Australian civilians training at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility

and 65 uniformed Royal Australian Navy officers and enlisted personnel within the U.S. Navy's Naval Nuclear Propulsion and submarine training pipelines.

The AUKUS Optimal Pathway consists of three interrelated phases that are in concurrent execution. Phase 1 involves establishing Submarine Rotational Force – West which will have up to four U.S. Virginia-class SSNs and one UK Astute-class SSN rotationally deploying out of HMAS *Stirling* in Western Australia. The U.S. submarines will be maintained primarily by Australian personnel trained at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility as a way to build Australia's sovereign ability to maintain SSNs. In Phase 2, the U.S. sells Virginia-class SSNs to Australia as its first conventionally armed SSNs. Phase 3 is the design, construction, and delivery of SSN AUKUS based on the UK's design that incorporates advanced technologies from the three partner nations. SSN AUKUS will serve as the sovereign, enduring SSN capability for both the Royal Navy and Royal Australian Navy.

AUKUS Pillar 1 will deliver a conventionally armed SSN capability to the RAN by the early 2030s. The Department of the Navy's AUKUS I&A Program Office is the U.S. lead responsible for executing the trilateral partnership for Australia to acquire conventionally armed, nuclear-powered attack submarines at the earliest possible date while maintaining the highest nuclear stewardship standards and setting the highest standards for nuclear non-proliferation.

NETC is the U.S. Navy's Force Development pillar and the service's largest shore command with a mission to recruit, train, and deliver those who serve our Nation, taking them from street-to-fleet by transforming civilians into highly skilled, operational, and combat ready warfighters.