

USS Colorado to be First Sub for Submarine Rotational Force – West



U.S. Secretary of War Pete Hegseth, Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence Richard Marles, and UK Secretary of State for Defence Wes Streeting are pleased to announce the designation of the USS Colorado (SSN 788) as the first U.S. Navy Virginia-class fast-attack submarine assigned to Submarine Rotational Force-West (SRF-West) beginning in late 2027.

This announcement comes ahead of the upcoming United States Submarine Maintenance Period, which begins later this week and will further demonstrate Australia's growing ability to sustain U.S. and UK nuclear-powered fast-attack submarines.

SRF-West is projected to host up to four U.S. fast-attack

submarines and one UK fast-attack submarine on a rotational basis at HMAS Stirling, a Royal Australian Navy base in Western Australia.

SRF-West will accelerate Australia's readiness to own, operate, maintain, and regulate a sovereign, conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability, as well as support submarine deployments by expanding maintenance options and sustainment infrastructure in the region for AUKUS partners.

SRF-West, established at Australia's invitation and as mutually determined, will operate in accordance with relevant international agreements between and among the United States, Australia, and the UK, including the United States – Australia Force Posture Agreement. AUKUS activities associated with SRF-West will be conducted consistent with the AUKUS partners' respective international obligations, including those under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and Australia's obligations under the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga).

As President Trump has stated, and Prime Minister Albanese and Prime Minister Burnham have reaffirmed, AUKUS is moving "full steam ahead." The selection of USS Colorado (SSN 788) as the first submarine assigned to SRF-West in 2027 marks a significant milestone for AUKUS Pillar I and is a decisive step in strengthening collective deterrence in the Pacific.

From U.S. Department of War, Australian Minister for Defence, and U.K. Secretary for Defence, Oct. 26, 2026