BLACK SWAN

STRATEGY PAPER

**ANZUS AT 100: ADAPTING TO NEXT-GENERATION ALLIANCE ISSUES
AUTHORED BY KATE CLAYTON**

DEFENCE AND SECURITY THROUGH AN INDO-PACIFIC LENS

UWA DEFENCE & SECURITY | THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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About the Black Swan Strategy Papers

The *Black Swan Strategy Papers* are the flagship publication of the UWA Defence and Security Institute (DSI). They represent the intersection between Western Australia and strategic studies – both of which are famous for their black swans. The series aims to provide high-quality analysis and strategic insights into the Indo-Pacific region through a defence and security lens, with the hope of reducing the number of 'black swan' events with which Australian strategy and Indo-Pacific security has to contend. Each of the Black Swan Strategy Papers are generally between 5,000 and 15,000 words and are written for a policy-oriented audience. The Black Swan Strategy Papers are commission works by the UWA DSI by invitation only.
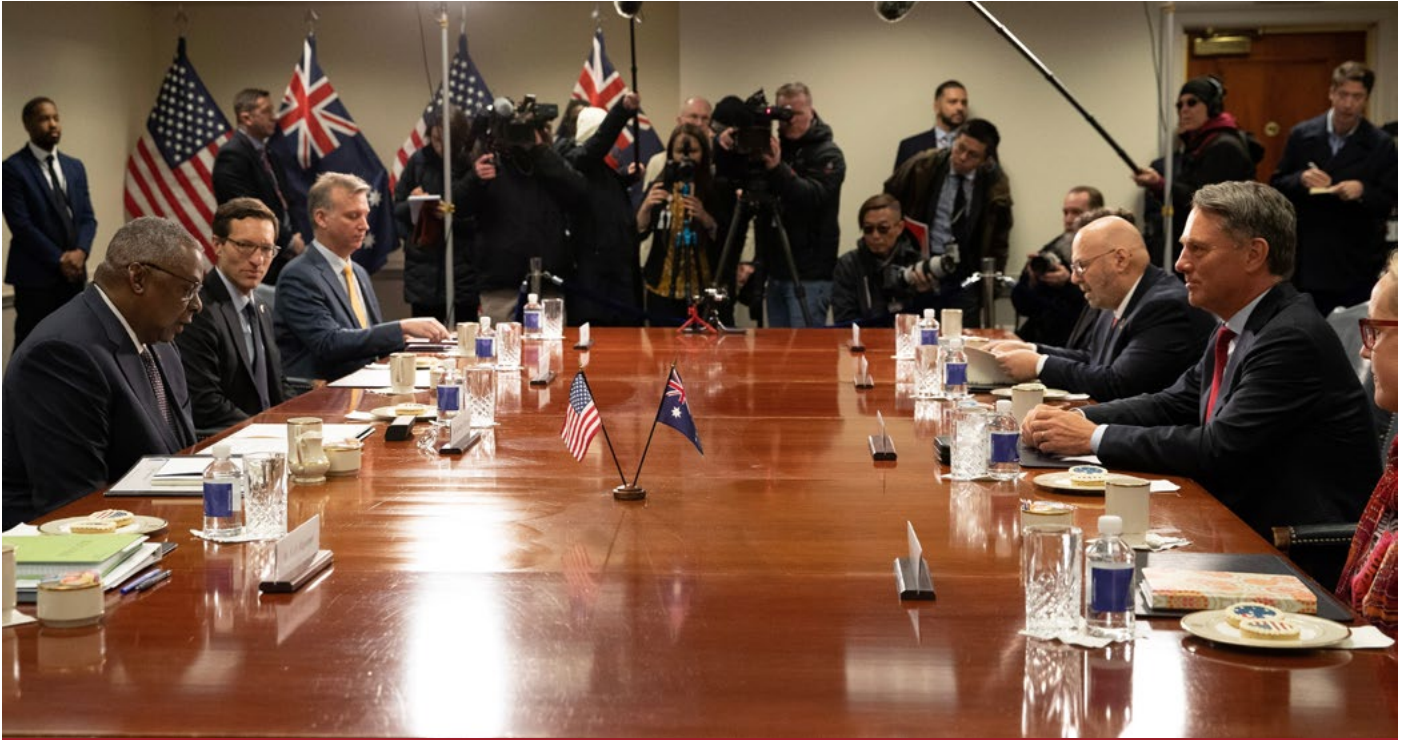Any comments or suggestions for the series can be directed to the editor.

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↑ Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence, the Hon. Richard Marles MP held a bilateral meeting with United States Secretary of Defense the Hon Lloyd J. Austin III, in Washington DC, United States on 3 February 2023.

Executive summary

As the power balance in the Indo-Pacific becomes more multipolar and global power gradually shifts away from the United States, the Australia-US Alliance ('the Alliance') will need to adapt to a new strategic environment. In addition, new threats to regional security, such as climate change and online misinformation and disinformation, pose new challenges to the Alliance, which it is currently ill-equipped to manage.

A new generation of Australians, who have grown up in a period of US relative decline and the backdrop of a rising Asia, will potentially challenge the ongoing fidelity to the Alliance. As migration increases and young Australians engage more with the Indo-Pacific, support for the Alliance could wane. This is compounded by the fact that current strategic and political debates around the Alliance have struggled to include new voices. Alliance discussions continue to be led by a narrow selection of traditional, largely male policy elites.

Moving forward, a more adaptable and more diverse Alliance network is crucial for Australia, the US and the region. To ensure its longevity and relevance, ANZUS must expand its conceptions of what constitutes 'security', and the Alliance more broadly should engage with 'new voices' and increase its engagement with the region.

Policy recommendations

- Recognise that future Alliance managers will have stronger connections to Asian partners than they will to the US.

- Continue to enhance security cooperation with Asian partners.

- Expand the conception of security in the Alliance to acknowledge non-traditional threats, including climate change, as per the 2019 Boe Declaration, to institutionalise climate action into Alliance structures.

- Deepen work alongside regional partners to combat online misinformation and disinformation and to strengthen democratic institutions in the Indo-Pacific.

- Facilitate greater diversity in Alliance culture through a more inclusive and diverse Alliance network.

↑ Defence Ministers' Meeting With US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin.

INTRODUCTION

In 2021 the ANZUS treaty celebrated its 70th anniversary. The Alliance relationship today is remarkably different from how it was at the signing of ANZUS in San Francisco in 1951. The United States and Australia are now faced with new security threats which challenge domestic and international security. ANZUS at 100 will look even more different.

The anniversary marks an important opportunity to reassess the future of the Alliance and if current Alliance cooperation will continue to stand the test of time. This paper explores how the next generation will view the US-Australia Alliance, and what issues will shape ANZUS at 100.

The bilateral partnership, while a key component of Australian foreign policy, has gone relatively unchallenged by both the US and Australia's mainstream strategic cultures. However, a lack of critical analysis and discussion of the relationship is not conducive to its longevity. By failing to discuss the changing nature of the relationship openly, it risks being stuck in the same geopolitical and cultural context in which the Alliance was created – post-WWII US hegemony and Australia's reliance on 'great and powerful friends'.

Today the strategic circumstances are rapidly changing. Australia has emerged since the 1950s as a strong middle power, capable of assisting in the governance of multilateral organisations and maintaining international security. The contemporary security threats Australia and the US now face are significantly different from those of 1951. For all these reasons, we must consider the future of the Alliance.

Two competing trends emerged at the beginning of the 21st century, which both played a major role in shaping the Alliance. First was US unipolarity – which saw an increase in US-led interventions in the Middle East and Africa. With the end of the Cold War and the events of September 11 2001, state-based threats declined, and non-state actors exerted influence

over US strategic thinking. For Australia, this meant working with the United States to combat terrorism in the Middle East. For the Alliance, it meant expanding its geographical scope from a predominant Asia-Pacific focus to include the Middle East.

The second major trend has been the rise of the 'Asian Century', characterised by a rising China, India and Indonesia, among others, and a re-centring of global wealth and power away from Europe and North America, towards what has now been termed the Indo-Pacific.

These two trends have shaped the experiences of the next generation of US-Australia Alliance managers. Caught between two key streams of international policymaking – Australia's alliance with the US and its increased engagement with the Indo-Pacific – young Australians are grappling with merging the historical diplomatic roots in the Anglosphere with our deeper engagement with Asia.

Alongside these two shifts in power, international security is being reimagined, with the emergence of non-state security threats, from terrorist groups in the first decade of the century to the effects of climate change, cyber security and online misinformation and disinformation campaigns. As power shifts towards Asia, the tools needed to manage strategic competition are expanding beyond military capabilities. As COVID-19 has demonstrated, threats to security and stability do not always come from states – climate change and cyber security increasingly pose new challenges to states too.

Alliance networks

In an address at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies on the Alliance, Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Richard Marles said that, "the treaty that codifies our Alliance is less a piece of paper than it is a network of people". This paper wishes to maintain a similar focus on people and will address how the

future networks of Alliance managers will shape the Alliance.

Over the past few years, I have been involved in US-Australia Alliance networks through my research, work and volunteering. This includes op-eds on Australian youth perceptions of the US in Australia and gender diversity in Alliance culture. Alongside writing, I have managed youth-engagement programs in my roles at La Trobe Asia and Young Australians in International Affairs. I also participated in the US-Australia Next Generation Leaders program with the UWA Defence and Security Institute. Throughout this time, I have seen a network of the next generation of leaders who are engaged with the Indo-Pacific and see the US as important to the region, but perhaps not as the most important relationship for Australia.

This paper will discuss the key issues facing the Alliance, and how it can secure its longevity for another 30 years. To facilitate a more durable Alliance, young Australians have argued for a more comprehensive US-Australia Alliance. Three key areas to enhance the Alliance have emerged: climate change; online misinformation and disinformation; and increased diversity.

ANZUS at 100 should be an expanded security framework and treaty that reconsiders the importance of emerging security threats. Otherwise, ANZUS's focus on traditional security runs the risk of making it ill-equipped to combat future threats, disasters and conflicts.

The Alliance, on the other hand, is at risk from changing governments in the US and Australia that might seek to undermine cooperation. While collaboration on new security issues, such as climate change, is key to the Biden-Albanese US Alliance, a change in governments could put this at risk. The Trump years highlighted to both Australia and the US the need to facilitate an active Alliance culture that goes beyond leaders. Widening the strategic culture of the Alliance to include more diverse voices and recognising generational and demographic shifts in Australia (and the US) will ensure that the Alliance remains relevant for generations to come.

↓ Next Generation Leaders Canberra 2019. Image courtesy of the Perth USAsia Centre.

↑ Exercise Koolendong 2022.

CHAPTER 1
A next-generation Alliance

The Alliance of the 21st century is remarkably different to that of the 20th century. Where the last century was characterised by US global primacy, the changing nature of the international system in this century means that US power is relatively declining as new powers emerge.

This is also combined with the fact that younger Australians have fewer personal memories of the US as a positive force in international relations. Having grown up in the post-Cold War era, the historical memory for most young Australians of the US is marked by 9/11, the War on Terror, humanitarian crisis in the Middle East, the Global Financial Crisis, and more recently the 'America First' nationalism of President Donald Trump. Unlike previous generations, young Australians today have fewer connections to the US as a stabilising force for good in international affairs. This considerably shapes how they view the US and the Alliance more broadly.

When discussed in isolation, perceptions of the US-Australia Alliance and ANZUS have not witnessed much change; however, broader trends see young people embracing both a multipolar and multicultural world. To better understand ANZUS at 100, it is pivotal to understand the perspectives of young people.

Lowy Institute polling indicates that youth perceptions of the US have been declining since 2018. Many attributed this to the 'Trump factor'; however, there was only a 5% increase in support for the US between 2020 and 2021 when President Biden

↑ Regional Workshop Program Canberra 2022.

came into office. While 2022 did see an increase, it will be difficult for the Alliance to regain support among young people. Increasingly, younger Australians trust Japan more than any other state. In 2019, 2% of younger Australians trusted the US a great deal, compared to 6% trusting China. This is a shift from older generations, who predominantly trust the United Kingdom and the United States. Furthermore, in the advent of US-China conflict, 63% of younger Australians think that Australia should

remain neutral, compared to 51% of the general population. Younger Australians are increasingly sceptical that the US is the best partner for Australia and are more hesitant to follow the US into conflict.

Ongoing cultural shifts in Australia might prove to be the biggest challenge to the future of the Alliance. The Alliance has faced two main challenges thus far this century – declining US legitimacy and a rising China – and this is the era in which current and future Alliance

managers have grown up. Young Australians are grappling with how to adapt to a new regional power structure, one in which our biggest economic partner is challenging our most important security partner. This, however, is the lived experience for this generation and as such it does not represent, at least intellectually, the challenge that it might be for contemporary Australian strategic policy elites. Young Australians are skilled at juggling these dual issues: they have iPhones designed in the US

and manufactured in Asia; they watch their favourite K-Pop stars on YouTube. Young Australians are less concerned about 'having to choose' between the US or China, but rather see a world in which both relationships can be managed in tandem.

Generational shifts in the Alliance are possible when a generation has negative experiences of the US, in what Charles Miller describes as the 'cohort' effect of the US-Australia Alliance. The war in Vietnam has been cited an example of this – younger Australians were less likely to support the US Alliance during the 1970s, but eventually, those citizens supported the Alliance as they aged. However, while there is evidence that previous generations harbouring anti-US sentiment become more pro-US as they age, I argue that the culture and demographics of young Australians make them less likely to support the Alliance today and as they age further. While the Vietnam generation has grown up to experience the US unipolar moment at the end of the Cold War, today's young people will likely continue to see further decline in US global power. Miller argues that alongside more people attending tertiary education, support for ANZUS is 'likely [to] decrease significantly' if 'Australia experiences large-scale immigration of predominantly young people from non-Anglophone backgrounds'.

Australia's changing demography is also likely to greatly impact future support for the Alliance, as Australia undergoes a demographic shift with increased immigration from Asia, particularly from China, India, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Sri Lanka. In their book *Australian Public Opinion, Defence and Foreign Policy,* Danielle Chubb and Ian McAllister argue that immigration is 'changing overall support for the alliance, and that support is weakest among those coming to Australia from Asia'. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 30% of Australia's population are born overseas, and therefore the next generation of Alliance managers will not look like they do today. As Australia becomes more multicultural, support for the Alliance could wane. Australian policymakers need to consider what it would be like to adapt to a future Alliance relationship that engenders less support than it does today,

and with an Australia that also has substantially stronger ties to Asia.

While Asian language skills are decreasing, Asian literacy among young Australians is growing. Australia's immediate region is the most popular destination for overseas study, with 49% of Australians studying overseas travelling throughout the Indo-Pacific, and 14% to China. This is compared to 10% of students studying abroad in the US. Australian programs such as the New Colombo Plan have supported over 75,000 young Australians in studying and undertaking internships in the Indo-Pacific. Through the New Colombo Plan, 'the Australian Government wants study and work-based experiences in the Indo-Pacific to become a rite of passage for young Australian undergraduate students'. However, there is no similar program supporting Australian students who want to travel to the US to study.

Once a key source of international attraction and influence, US 'soft power' is also waning as younger generations turn to Asia for their media consumption. The rise of TikTok, streaming services and other social media has given young Australians access to media content worldwide. K-Pop has seen more people enrolling in Korean language classes, despite trends in Asian language skills declining. The increasing popularity of Asian soft power strengthens people-to-people connections between Australians and their peers in Asia.

Australia's healthy youth diplomacy networks have seen not-for-profit dialogues created to enhance bilateral relations with the Pacific, ASEAN, Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, China and India. These youth-run programs aim to strengthen cross-cultural ties between Australia and the region across public, private and government sectors. At present, no such grassroots organisation exists for

Australia and the US.

A 'black swan' event could challenge support for the US Alliance, and a Chinese Communist Party invasion of Taiwan could be that event. While Lowy polling from 2022 indicates that war in Taiwan is the third biggest concern to Australia's interests amongst the general population, with people aged 18-30, it only rated fifth. Climate change and economic challenges are seen as more of a threat to Australia's interests than international security issues, demonstrating that younger people are more concerned about domestic politics when looking at Australia's interests, compared to older generations who view Russia and China's foreign policy as the biggest threats. In the same Lowy poll, respondents were asked if there was a military conflict between China and the US, who should Australia support; young Australians were more hesitant to support the US than older Australians, with 63 per cent arguing for neutrality. While an event such as an invasion of Taiwan is likely to challenge or even ignite US support, the desire to stay neutral among younger generations must not be underestimated or misunderstood. Young Australians increasingly do not see the world in such binary terms.

A regional alliance

Australians largely have understood that the strategic environment over the last 20 years has needed US power to maintain the regional status quo. As global power shifts towards our region, Australia's geography is becoming increasingly important to the Alliance. Still connected to its colonial roots through AUKUS and Five Eyes, Australia remains a white settler-colony, on unceded land, in the Asia-Pacific. Flanked by the Indian and Pacific Oceans, Australia does not fit perfectly into any regional conceptions.

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While Australia has opportunities to further strengthen its relations with Japan, South Korea, India and Indonesia, the US remains a focus of Australian strategic thinking.

This has seen Australia behave in international affairs as an anxious nation, with an emphasis on a 'fear of abandonment'. Australia depends on its 'great and powerful friends' for its security. Historically, Australia has felt greater cultural connections with the UK and the US. While these historical ties remain contemporary in conceptions of its defence, as demonstrated by AUKUS, younger generations do not fear being abandoned by the US and the UK. Young Australians see themselves increasingly as a part of Asia, and less so as part of the Anglosphere. Australia, once seen as awkwardly placed in Asia, is now increasingly viewed as a geography that is leaning into the region.

Young Australians do not share the same historical connections with the US as previous generations. Instead, their Alliance perceptions are shaped by costly wars, humanitarian failures and financial crisis. Without living memory of the US as a 20th century force for good, young Australians are increasingly sceptical of the importance of the Alliance and ANZUS. This will no doubt considerably shape how ANZUS functions at 100 in the year 2051.

As power in the Indo-Pacific diversifies, with rising powers such as Japan, India and Indonesia becoming increasingly important in regional architecture, the Anglospheric nature of the Alliance could also isolate it from the region by making it an outlier among a diverse network of multilateral and minilateral groupings. Thus, it is vital that the future of the US-Australia Alliance is embedded within regionally focused Indo-Pacific frameworks.

Over the past two years, the US has taken up much of Australia's strategic thinking and culture. Biden's election saw the US return to its more traditional role in the international community. Alongside this, 2021 saw the 70th anniversary of ANZUS and the announcement of the AUKUS agreement. The Australian Government must ensure that strategic relations with Indo-Pacific partners are strong.

Alongside a renewed excitement for the Alliance since Biden took office, Australia has been increasing its relationships with its friends in Asia. A Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between Australia and ASEAN was announced at the beginning of 2021, followed by a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with Malaysia in May. Foreign minister Marise Payne visited Malaysia, Cambodia, Vietnam and Indonesia. Notably, in September 2021, Australia committed to 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministers meetings with South Korea, India and Indonesia. However, the four-state trip that began in Indonesia did conclude in the US with the announcement of AUKUS, followed by AUSMIN meetings.

Within hours of being sworn in as Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese and the new Foreign Minister, Penny Wong, flew to Tokyo for the 2022 Quad Leaders Meeting. This foreshadowed a new Labor government that actively sought to strengthen Australia's relations with the region. Travelling around the Indo-Pacific, in particular Southeast Asia and the Pacific, Wong has demonstrated a new brand of Australian diplomacy that emphasises 'listening' to regional partners.

While Australia has opportunities to further strengthen its relations with Japan, South Korea, India and Indonesia, the US remains a focus of Australian strategic thinking. For the next generation of Alliance managers who are more engaged with Asia, it is likely that the trend of regional engagement will increase, and potentially take up more strategic thinking than the Alliance does.

As young Australians become more diverse in demographics, consume more soft power from the region and enhance people-to-people relations through travel and youth dialogues, ensuring popular support for the US Alliance may become more challenging. One way to address this would be to emphasise its importance as a tool for more Australian foreign and defence policy with a focus on regional engagement. Thus, Australia and the US must work more closely with regional partners to remain relevant and better adapt to regional concerns. Next-generation Alliance managers see the strengthening of the Alliance as anchoring Australia within broader regional frameworks, enabling Australia better access to new security partners.

↑ Royal Australian Navy sailors on board HMAS Adelaide load disaster relief supplies onto a MRH-90 Taipan that is bound for Nabouwalu on the island of Vanua Levu, Fiji, during Operation Fiji Assist.

CHAPTER 2
Alliance security: Climate change and the Pacific

Young Australians have different threat perceptions from contemporary policymakers. The 2022 Lowy Institute Poll revealed that 75% of young Australians see climate change as the biggest threat to Australia, and only 52% see conflict with the US and China over Taiwan as a critical threat. It is not just young Australians who see climate change as the most important security threat, but also Australia's partners in the Pacific.

The ANZUS treaty forged the beginnings of a 70-year relationship in the Pacific. Fighting alongside one another in the Pacific against the threat of imperial Japan, Australia and the US demonstrated the strength of working together during the Second World War. However, the Pacific Islands have been largely left out of Alliance discourse until recently. Climate change and the emergence of China have seen the Alliance broaden out to the Pacific

region once more. As the region has seen increased attention globally due to attempts of Chinese influence, and with Pacific leaders key to global climate diplomacy efforts, climate change and the Pacific will be key to future Alliance cooperation.

Stronger partnerships in the Pacific will enhance Australian and US interests in the region and help to mitigate the effects of climate change. However, for Pacific

engagement in the region to be successful, the US and Australia must broaden their perceptions of security to include climate change. The biggest threat facing Pacific islands is a non-traditional security threat - climate change, which poses an existential risk to Pacific island nations. The Pacific islands are among the first to experience the effects of climate change, with predictions that islands including Kiribati and Tuluva will be completely submerged and unhabitable in the next 50-100 years. Many smaller islands, including South Tarawa in Kiribati, will be underwater in the next 25 years.

The election of President Joe Biden has seen the US promote climate change to the centre of US foreign policy. On his first day in office, Biden re-joined the Paris Agreement and appointed former Vice President John Kerry

as Special Climate Envoy, marking a US re-entry into international organisations after four years of Trump protectionism. Speaking at the Pacific Islands Forum in August 2021, Biden declared the US a "proud Pacific power", committing to "dramatically" reducing climate emissions by 2030 and "building resilience into vulnerable communities globally". For many Indo-Pacific partners, this demonstrated a US reinvestment in issues central to the region after the indifference of the Trump years.

At the same forum, then prime minister Scott Morrison discussed "working alongside our Pacific family to maintain a resilient, sustainable and secure region", only mentioning climate change in reference to Australia joining the Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones Against Climate Change-Related Sea-Level Rise. At COP26 in November 2021, Australia made its first commitment to achieving net zero emissions by 2050.

While purportedly built on shared interests and shared values, the Alliance has been tested by divergent interests on the issue of climate change, specifically in the period between the election of the Biden administration and the 2022 Australian election. Although the US and Australia have both been climate laggards at times over the past decade, their climate policies were starkly non-aligned for 14 months. Since the election of Anthony Albanese and the announcement of Australia committing to 43% reduction by 2030, the Alliance has also experienced a climate revival. The 2022 AUSMIN meetings made climate change collaboration a key pillar of the Alliance.

In his speech to Parliament on the 70th anniversary of the ANZUS treaty, then opposition leader Albanese described climate change as "one of the most significant security challenges of the 21st century", citing the US Defence commitment and understanding of climate change as an 'existential threat'. Albanese declared that "we should immediately deepen US-Australia cooperation on climate security issues". Nearly a year into the Albanese government, a lot more climate action is needed to achieve this. Beyond regional climate

commitments through the Quad, Australia and the US can now work together to ensure a green economy and climate resilience across the region, particularly in the Pacific.

The Biden-Albanese era must not be taken for granted. Climate change sceptics within Australia and the US challenge the sustainability of long-term climate cooperation. The Morrison and Trump governments exemplified this, with the groundwork laid by the Obama and Rudd administrations on climate change left to the side. Although the Biden-Albanese Alliance has a strong focus on climate change action, this is at risk if a new government in either state is elected, and progress could wane. Support for the Alliance varies between the countries, with United States Studies Centre polling indicating that Australians are more concerned about climate change than Americans. US and Australian interests are not always shared. Further strengthening climate cooperation in the Alliance is important to ensuring that regional cooperation is maintained for decades to come.

The 2020 Australian Defence Strategic Update (DSU) only mentions 'climate change' once. It states that 'pandemics, and growing water and food scarcity – are likely to result in greater political instability and friction within and between countries and reshape our security environment, including in the Indo-Pacific. The threats will be compounded by population growth, urbanisation and extreme weather events in which climate change plays a part. Within Australia, the intensity and frequency of disasters – such as the 2019-2020 Black Summer bushfires – will test Australia's resilience.' The DSU views climate change as a contributor to global security issues, not as a cause. Without recognising climate change as a threat to security, Australia is less equipped to handle future global challenges.

For the Pacific, regional climate policy is seen in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific. The 2050 strategy recognises the 'region's enduring challenges such as climate change-related impacts, coupled with intensification of geostrategic competition, exacerbating the region's

existing vulnerabilities'. In a speech by former prime minister of Samoa, Tuilaepa Lipesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi on the Blue Pacific, the region is re-framed from Pacific islands to 'large ocean island states'. The Blue Pacific emphasises the traditional historical relationship between Pacific islanders and the ocean, through 'values, traditional practices and spiritual connections'. The Blue Pacific is not a strategic concept in the same way the Indo-Pacific is framed, as it aims to centre and uplift Pacific voices.

In June 2022, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, the UK and the US announced the Partners in the Blue Pacific Initiative. The is the culmination of Pacific Step-Up-like initiatives across all five states. As China's engagement with the region continues to expand, the five states are keen to ensure their own influence and strategic interests remain relevant to Pacific nations. The joint statement released by the five partners emphasised supporting the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific, Pacific regionalism and enhancing Pacific cooperation globally. While this represents a step in the right direction, it is important to note that this is a partnership for the Pacific, not by the Pacific. The initiative has been critiqued for ignoring regional decision-making processes and co-opting the 'Blue Pacific' for strategic purposes. Here, Australia and the US must utilise Penny Wong's 'listening' language and agenda, the Partners for the Blue Pacific must work to uplift Pacific voices, not speak over them.

Climate collaboration

There is an opportunity for the US and Australia to work alongside Pacific Island nations on climate security. This will further help assuage Alliance concerns about Chinese engagement in the region. For states in the Pacific, Australia's poor climate policy has seen them increasingly turn to China. This is despite China being the biggest emitter of greenhouse gasses at 27% of global emissions (the US is in second place at 11%) and with new coal power plants opening. If the US and Australia want to remain the partner of choice in the Pacific, the Alliance should step up its regional commitments to climate change.

↑ Deputy Commander US Pacific Command, Lieutenant General James Jarrad, and Chief Of Army, Lieutenant General Simon Stuart, took the opportunity to greet the visiting US Aircrew, joining Commander Army Aviation Command, Major General Stephen Jobson, to view the US Army AH-64E Apache and UH-60M Black Hawk that will soon be joining the Australian Army fleet, along with an Australian Army CH-47F Chinook. The aircraft have made a scheduled stop at Canberra Airport to refuel as they transit from Sydney to the Australian International Airshow 2023 in Avalon, Victoria.

The Albanese government is hoping to co-host COP31 with Pacific nations. However, Pacific leaders have warned Australia that Australia needs to end fossil fuel subsidies if it wants Pacific support. For Australia to be taken seriously as a climate ally in the region, it must strengthen its domestic climate policy.

At the 2022 AUSMIN meetings in Washington, the Alliance 'redoubled their commitment to cooperation with the Pacific islands in supported of their objectives of the Pacific Islands Forum 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, guided by Pacific priorities of climate change'. The joint statement elevates climate collaboration to a key pillar of the Alliance, emphasising the importance of 'urgent action on climate change', working on clean energy and environmental protections bilaterally and the with region. The commitments must be followed through at the operational policy level, not just the declaratory.

Australia and the US have long cooperated over climate-related environmental disasters. This occurred most recently in the 2019-2020 bushfires in Eastern Australia, in which approximately 17 million hectares of land were destroyed, including 3,094 homes, and 33 people died. The bushfire deaths included US firefighters, who were among 222 firefighters flown into Australia. US assistance in Australian bushfires is part of an agreement between the two allies on emergency and fire management resources, whereby natural resources are recognised as a shared value, and the two states exchange 'wild fire management resources', which establishes inter-agency support for mutual cooperation.

Operation Bushfire Assist saw the region come together to help Australia. This included support from Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the US. The regional response to Australia's bushfire emergency is emblematic of decades of cooperation on disaster relief.

With bushfires at the beginning of 2020, the end of the year was also marked with another climate emergency, as Cyclone Yasa hit Fiji.

Australia committed $4.5 million to support disaster relief efforts, deploying HMAS *Adelaide* for three weeks to assist and the Australian Army's 6th Engineering Support Regiment to help with clearing debris and repairing critical infrastructure. Alongside this, the ADF sent C-17A Globemaster aircraft with emergency supplies and two RAAF P-8A Poseidon aerial assessment missions to provide imaging of the cyclone damage. More recently, the Australian Defence Force Operation Tonga Assist 2022 supported Tonga following a volcano eruption and related tsunami. Similar to its response to Cyclone Yasa, HMAS *Adelaide* provided humanitarian supplies and personnel to support disaster recovery.

It is vital for the Alliance's longevity that it expands its understanding of security. To embody a more robust Indo-Pacific Alliance, Australia and the US must work with regional partners on non-traditional security issues, including health security and humanitarian and disaster relief. The 2022 Quad Leaders Joint Statement is a good example of a multilateral security framework focusing on future security risks. The origin of the Quad was forged during the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami, demonstrating the importance of regional collaboration on non-traditional security threats. The US and Australia should enhance HADR cooperation with regional partners, particularly as the effects of climate change accelerate.

When ANZUS turns 100, some islands in the South Pacific will be overwhelmed by rising sea levels, posing an existential threat unlike any other security threat. The Alliance will need to adapt to these challenges. Australia should work with the US and incorporate broader security definitions into its Alliance framework, as per the Boe Declaration. This will help to ensure climate change preparedness and improve relations with the South Pacific. The 2018 Pacific Islands Forum formalised the Boe Declaration, and states that climate change is the biggest threat to security in the Pacific islands. The Boe Declaration expands traditional security concepts beyond state-based threats to incorporate human and environmental security, making

a theoretical distinction between traditional and non-traditional security threats.

Australia and the US should formalise their recognition of the Boe Declaration and its conceptions of security. A 2018 Senate enquiry described climate change as 'a current and existential national security risk', but Australia is yet to recognise climate change as a national security threat. By recognising Boe's expansion of security, Australia and the US can demonstrate their commitment to both Pacific island states and climate change action. This will help emphasise the importance of the 'Blue Pacific' in Indo-Pacific frameworks. Recognising the Boe Declaration's conception of security will help to uplift Pacific islander agency in the region and expand ANZUS's traditional security framework.

By working more closely with Pacific states on climate change, Australia and the US will help to ensure they remain the partners of choice for Pacific island states as China's interests in the region increase. Further, it will help to codify bilateral collaboration beyond leaders, creating sustainable long-term cooperation for years to come. A formalised understanding of climate change as it pertains to security threats will also help to ensure that climate cooperation transcends Alliance leaders. While Biden and Albanese are committed to climate collaboration, a change in leadership could threaten Alliance work on climate change.

CHAPTER 3
Strengthening online misinformation and disinformation cooperation to strengthen democracy

This chapter focuses on the threat of online misinformation and disinformation and what it means for Alliance understandings of security and its increasing risk to the democratic foundations of the Alliance. The Alliance's focus on traditional security threats could see it ill-equipped to manage online misinformation and disinformation issues into the future.

The 2011 AUSMIN Joint Statement on Cyberspace expanded the provisions of Article III of the ANZUS treaty to include cyber threats, whereby it stated, 'in the event of a cyber-attack that threatens the territorial integrity, political independence or security of either of our nations, Australia and the United States would consult together and determine appropriate options to address the threat'. This was a recognition by both states that conflict is no longer fought by militaries, and technological capabilities represented a threat to the US and Australia. However, this should be revisited to assess the risks posed by online misinformation and disinformation.

Over the past decade, Australia and the US have increased their cyber interoperability. However, new cyber threats continue to emerge to threaten stability globally – most recently, online misinformation and disinformation. The January 6 US Capitol riots were a dark day for the US and also for democracies globally. It was the culmination of years of online misinformation and disinformation efforts, demonstrating the damaging effects of nefarious online activities. The US and Australia must strengthen their cyber interoperability to ensure that online misinformation and disinformation do not threaten their shared values and interest in democracy.

In April 2021, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade launched Australia's International Cyber and Critical Technology Engagement. Article 19 of the strategy focuses on disinformation and misinformation, aiming to 'build international resilience to digital disinformation and misinformation and their effects'. The strategy focuses on building international partnerships with Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific; however, the strategy's focus should be expanded to include the wider Indo-Pacific region.

The 2022 AUSMIN Joint Statement commitments to 'deepening collaboration on cybersecurity', which included 'the need for regional cooperation to improve cybersecurity and combat disinformation', alongside the Quad states and to 'bolster Pacific efforts to counter disinformation'. While talk on disinformation in the joint statement is in regards to health, this should be broadened to ensure democratic stability in the region. Countering misinformation and disinformation should be entrenched into other regional frameworks, including AUKUS. Pillar II of AUKUS recognises 'hybrid threats' and the importance of cyber in the changing nature of war.

Future challenges

The importance of safeguarding our democracies from 'cyber-enabled foreign interference' cannot be overstated. Reflecting on Chinese interference during COVID-19 and election interference since 2016, Cave and Wallis observe that 'Globalisation and the openness of democracies make these acute challenges, as their openness has left democratic states vulnerable to threats of interference and subversion'. The vulnerability of democracy is evident in other areas. When asked if 'democracy is preferable to any other kind of government' in 2018 Lowy Institute Poll only 49% of young Australian's agreed with the statement, compared to 62% of all Australians. While support for democracy has increased since the question was last asked in 2020, it remains a concern that young Australians have less faith in our democratic systems.

TikTok, owned by Chinese company ByteDance, is the most popular social media app for younger people. For users, the carefully curated algorithm is an antidote to US-owned Twitter, YouTube and Facebook, where the user experience is diminished by advertisements and a less-advanced algorithm that shows content outside of a user's interests. While Facebook remains the most downloaded app, its popularity is declining among younger generations, who are increasingly turning to TikTok. In Australia, TikTok was the second most downloaded Australian app in 2020 (Zoom was first), with 70% of Australia's TikTok users being young people.

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The Australian and US governments have raised concerns about TikTok. Victorian Senator James Paterson has led the Australian critiques of TikTok, raising concerns that 'user data is accessibly in mainland China, putting it within reach of the Chinese Government'. While the long-term effects of TikTok on politics are yet to be determined, with its popularity only expanding beyond Asia in the past few years, there is concern about TikTok's censorship. The Australian Strategic Policy Institute reported in 2020 that 'TikTok engages in censorship on a range of politics and social topics, including LGBTQIA+ issues, Xinjiang, Tiananmen Square and Tibet.'

More concerningly, TikTok enables white supremacist, extremist and terrorist content to circulate on the app with little moderation. An investigation by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue found that 30% of its 1,030 research samples conducted during June 2021 featured content that supported white supremacism and 24% support for an extremist or terrorist. This includes original content from ISIS and the glorification of Brenton Tarrant and Adolf Hitler. TikTok's moderating capabilities are not as strong as those of Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, making it easier for extremist content to circulate on the app without it being removed. However, recent lay-offs at US-based tech companies, including Google, Twitter, Meta and YouTube have seen teams working on misinformation amongst the first to lose their jobs, signalling an upcoming decline in their ability to manage online misinformation. This poses a challenge to the shared-values nature of the Alliance, as extremism threatens democracies globally, particularly if TikTok is quickly becoming the app of choice for many younger people.

The Quad provides a platform for regional collaboration, with the four states being regional cyber and technology leaders. Quad states should aim to improve democratic institutions regionally via the strengthening of misinformation cyber capabilities, alongside their other public goods initiatives. Social media poses risks for democratic health in Australia, the US and globally. Combatting misinformation and disinformation in the region can include joint programs on misinformation and disinformation, and education resources for citizens to identify disinformation. At the government level, increased dialogues on misinformation and disinformation with relevant departments could see a more regional approach. Combatting misinformation requires a whole-of-government approach, including the Defence, Foreign Affairs and Trade, Education and intelligence communities. More work can be done on combatting misinformation in the region with the help of the Alliance, as it challenges democracies and facilitates extremism globally.

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CHAPTER 4
Gender and diversity in Alliance networks

At his speech to the Centre for Strategic & International Studies in Washington on the Alliance, Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Richard Marles stated that 'the treaty that codifies our alliance is less of a piece of paper than it is an organic network of people'.

↑ Meeting with Admiral Fagan, Commandant of the US Coast Guard.

The network of Alliance managers is one of the key strengths of the Alliance, allowing for a whole-of-community approach to strengthening bilateral relations. However, an Alliance built on 'mateship' has seen a primary focus on only a small group of Alliance network managers.

In the lead-up to his 2019 meeting with Trump in Washington, Morrison remarked that the Alliance is entering its 'second century of mateship'. Two years prior, the Australian Embassy in Washington announced its 'Patrons of the Alliance' to celebrate '100 years of mateship'. All of the patrons were men. Alliance culture in Australia remains predominantly 'pale, male and stale' – putting at risk the longevity and relevance of the Alliance. Without an Alliance that accurately represents the populations of Australia and the US, the Alliance is seen as representing only a minority of the community. With men as the primary Alliance managers in Australia, diverse voices are siloed.

To mark the 70th anniversary of ANZUS, the Australian Strategic Policy Institute and Routledge published special editions on the Alliance; however, the diversity of authors in these texts was disappointing. Of the 11 authors in 'The Future of the United States-Australia Alliance', none were women. And in 'ANZUS at 70: The past, present and future of the alliance' only 10 of the 43 authors were women. These two publications marking a milestone year are emblematic of broader Alliance trends that tend to neglect diverse voices.

A quantitative analysis of online events during September and October 2021 (during the announcement of AUKUS and the anniversary of ANZUS) from the three main Australian foreign policy think tanks reveals that two of them have below 50% female representation in their online events. Events on AUKUS were more likely to be male-dominated or 'manels' - male-only panels – compared to other event topics. Further research on the online blogs of each think tank covering the topics of the Alliance, AUKUS and ANZUS from August-October 2022 revealed a similar trend – most writers and researchers on the topics were men. This is not due to a lack of women and gender diverse researchers on these topics.

Unsurprisingly, the 2019 Lowy Institute Report revealed that 'Australia's international relations sector has a severe gender imbalance'. There has never been an Australian female ambassador to the United States, and there have also been no female ambassadors to the UK, Indonesia, Japan or Thailand. Five Eyes states have only had two female ambassadors, and of Australia's top 10 trading partners, five missions have never had a female head of mission. The more importance Australia places on a particular state, it appears the less likely it is to have a female leading the mission.

However, there are some improvements being made: Caroline Kennedy is the current US Ambassador to Australia, and the past three

heads of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Australian Foreign Affairs Ministers have been women. Women have also held high-ranking US positions, such as Hillary Clinton, the former US secretary of state. Change in the diplomatic and political community appears to be happening more quickly than in the think tank and academic cliques.

While the inclusion of women in the Alliance varies from think tanks and government arenas, there is still a gap in the inclusion of people of colour in the Alliance. Since coming into office, Penny Wong has introduced a First Nations Foreign Policy, which includes the appointment of an ambassador for First Nations people who will 'lead work to embed Indigenous perspectives, experiences and interests into our foreign policy, including to help grow First Nations' trade and investment'. At this year's AUSMIN, the leaders 'committed to ensuring Indigenous peoples' voices are heard at the international level, and that we protect, learn from, and embed their knowledge and experience to deal with global challenges'. This is the first time that Indigenous peoples from the US and Australia have been mentioned in the AUSMIN Joint Statements. This is a welcomed step in diversifying the Alliance, but time will tell if words will be followed by actions.

The election of the Albanese government and their commitment to the Uluru Statement from the Heart has widened the parameters

of Alliance culture to become more inclusive of Indigenous communities across Australia and the US. In February 2023, the Perth USAsia Centre hosted an address with US Secretary of the Interior, Deb Haalad, a member of the Peublo of Laguna and the first Native American to serve as cabinet secretary. In her address, Secretary Haaland highlighted 'the importance of Indigenous knowledge' alongside climate change. Ambassador Kennedy has been described as having a 'special interest' in the Uluru Statement from the Heart, also attending the 2022 Garma Festival alongside Albanese.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, as Australia (along with the US) becomes more multicultural and enhances its links with Asia, support for the Alliance will most likely wane. Therefore, to ensure that the Alliance remains relevant, it needs to be more inclusive and open to newer voices; a more diverse Alliance is a more adaptable Alliance. If the Alliance can adapt to emerging security issues, then its relevance and longevity will have firmer foundations.

To ensure the Alliance remains relevant at 100 years, Alliance culture must better reflect Australian society. As it stands, Alliance managers are a small group of primarily white men, to the exclusion of more diverse voices. If Australia wants the Alliance to last for another 30 years, Defence and foreign policy leaders need to consider whom they are asking to manage the Alliance, as the next generation of Alliance managers will expect more from Alliance culture and its leaders. By excluding diverse voices from Alliance discussions, the Alliance is excluding new voices who will help ensure future Alliance relevance.

CONCLUSION

Non-traditional security threats such as climate change, misinformation and pandemics are increasingly important and will continue to pose new challenges.

An expanded Alliance agenda would take these threats into greater consideration and would pave the way for more collaboration over climate change and better equip our technology and information systems to combat misinformation and disinformation, strengthening regional democracies.

Entrenching the Alliance into the Indo-Pacific will help to anchor ANZUS as a key security partner for the region. Adopting a broader conception of security and formalising Alliance recognition of the Boe Declaration will help strengthen ANZUS-Pacific island relations and ensure the treaty is more prepared for future security threats, primarily around the issue of climate change. As online misinformation and extremist content proliferate, the Alliance must work alongside regional partners to ensure that democratic institutions remain strong.

Climate change and online misinformation offer new opportunities for Australia and the US to collaborate. Enhanced cooperation on these issues will bring the Alliance into the 21st century and should actively include a new generation of Alliance leaders. However, these programs will need to be institutionalised to avoid backsliding on cooperation, as was seen with climate change collaboration during the Trump-Morrison years.

The shared interests and shared values of the Alliance must include diversity, because the US-Australia relationship does not just exist in board rooms or at round tables. More diversity in Alliance discussions helps to ensure its relevance and longevity. It is up to today's Alliance leaders to ensure that tomorrow's Alliance holds the same importance as it does today.

These five policy recommendations are not just for government but all Alliance managers. These include think tanks, universities, and corporations. The US-Australia Alliance is not just about government relations. The key strength of the Alliance is that people-to-people connections have become entrenched through the initial 70 years of relations. This must not be taken for granted. The Alliance risks becoming irrelevant by failing to adapt to new security threats and facilitating a diverse Alliance community. In order to celebrate ANZUS at 100, it is up to the Alliance managers of today to ensure that over the next 30 years they continue to safeguard its longevity by maintaining its relevance.

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THE FUTURE OF THE AUSTRALIA – U.S. ALLIANCE

THE ALLIANCE NETWORK PROGRAM

This Black Swan Strategy Paper has been developed as part of the Alliance Network Program. This program supported by the Embassy of the United States of America, is a multi-year public diplomacy, research and engagement activity designed to bring together influential leaders and emerging scholars currently specialising in regional security, economics or public policy to discuss the state of the Australia-United States Alliance and explore new areas of knowledge.

The first itineration of the program, developed by the Perth USAsia Centre under the direction of Professor Peter J Dean, took place on 13-14 February 2020 at the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University. The subsequent program in 2021, developed by the UWA Defence and Security Institute, held workshops in Perth (UWA DSI), Brisbane (Griffith Asia Institute) and Sydney (United States Studies Centre) between March and May 2021. The workshops were designed to ascertain Australian views of the Alliance relationship and were held under the Chatham House Rule to encourage a frank and open discussion. From each of these workshops, a small number of emerging and early career scholars were selected to undertake further policy work and travel to Washington DC to engage with US think tanks and policy makers. This Black Swan Strategy Paper represents a policy discussion from one of these emerging scholars.

About the UWA Defence & Security Institute

The UWA Defence and Security Institute (DSI) is an initiative by The University of Western Australia (UWA). Hosted at UWA, the DSI unifies and focuses UWA's expertise in defence and security research, engagement and education. Defence and security provide the foundation of our nation's sovereignty. In an era of rapidly evolving geopolitics, this critical area of national policy sits at the forefront of government and public debates. The DSI plays a central role in helping to develop Australia's sovereign defence capabilities in WA by working with local, state and federal governments, industry and business, research institutions and the community to help generate solutions towards a peaceful, prosperous and secure Australia and Indo-Pacific region.