



Edition 1, 2024

Maritime Sustainment Division | Newsletter

HMS Message

Welcome to the first edition of the newsletter for 2024. I hope you and your family had a safe and rejuvenating Christmas and New Year break. As the break concludes, we’re back on deck, ready for a busy yet productive year ahead.

As this newsletter was being developed, I was making my way around to the regions. I’ve been in the role of HMS for just over a year now, and I believed it was important to take this time to visit you all. For the Executives and I, the visits were intended to create an opportunity for deep discussions to really understand your needs and ensure your voices were heard. We wanted to seek your insights to help us enhance the Division’s future. We wanted to address uncertainties, discuss important topics, and provide updates where we could. I know I got a lot from these visits, and I sincerely hope you did too. You can read more about the key themes and initiatives of these visits on page 2.

Your hard work and dedication has led to the achievement of some significant milestones for the division in 2023. I know it was a busy year, in an environment of uncertainty, and I appreciate your hard work in delivering business as usual while we transform how we do business to the Maritime Sustainment Model (MSM).

This year, our focus will be to complete the organisational change path we are on to enable us to get on with business as quickly as possible. As we go through this necessary transformation, I ask you to please remain flexible.

In what is a bumper edition for this newsletter, you will read about some of the excellent work our people have been doing around the Division; in the West, in Cairns, and in establishing Regional Maintenance Centres (RMCs) East and North with Regional Maintenance Providers (RMPs) appointed in each location. It is exciting to see all RMCs in the network at various stages of establishment.

You will also be updated on the MSD Organisational Change Stage One and the MSD Strategy.

I look forward to working with you in 2024 to deliver flexible, intelligent and responsive sustainment for our customers.

Kind regards

SJ Tiffen
Rear Admiral, Royal Australian Navy
Head Maritime Sustainment
Maritime Sustainment Division



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HMS addresses Indo-Pac 2023 audience

On Thursday 9 November 2023, HMS spoke at the Indo-Pacific 2023 International Maritime Exposition to a predominantly customer and industry-based audience. He spoke about how MSD is evolving how it conducts business to provide intelligent, responsive, and flexible sustainment.

He explained that to optimise Navy's ability to operate in Australia's immediate region and work seamlessly with other domains, as well as partner nations, MSD is approaching its responsibilities with seriousness and urgency.

"Under the umbrella of a Strategy for the Division, and an implementation plan to deliver it, MSD is shifting its mindset, and we are transforming from a product specific approach to sustainment, to one that is fleet-wide, flexible, responsive and focuses on the generation of military effects," said RADM Tiffen.

"Through initiatives such as adjusting our governance boards, aligning our Systems Program Offices (SPO) with Navy capability programs, better performance metrics on fleet readiness and a more flexible resource allocation, we'll generate several benefits for Navy and our customers," added RADM Tiffen.

"For industry, we want to enter into longer term relationships as partners, provide a much longer term, stable demand signal and continue to remove unnecessary barriers to entry. In developing our Divisional Strategy, we are looking to build trust and optimise contract outcomes," said RADM Tiffen.

"We also want to work more closely with our industry partners to develop long term suitably qualified and experienced personnel and this may entail high levels of workforce integration to provide the skills and experiences needed."

Read about the MSD Strategy and the Strategy Implementation Plan on page 9.

HMS on tour

Over the four weeks prior to the 2023-24 Reduced Activity Period, HMS was on the road to visit the regions and meet with MSD personnel to provide a wrap-up of the year, celebrate achievements and recognise individuals' successes. The visit also provided the opportunity for HMS and the MSD Executive to hold informal discussions with personnel to delve into some deeper issues around the APS Census 2023 results, discuss important topics and address uncertainty and concerns as a result of the continued organisational change within MSD.

Some of the key takeaways from the visits include that personnel:

- Are interested in the strategic direction of the Division and want to hear more on this.
- Are less change-fatigued than uncertainty-fatigued. However, despite this, personnel would rather honesty and transparency in relation to the uncertainty surrounding organisational change; they would rather the Executive state there are still unknowns than the Executive knowing but keeping it close hold. Staff do not want to be kept in the dark.
- Are seeking recognition, support and responsiveness from their leaders.
- Need adequate resources in order to undertake the transformation of MSD – avoiding burn out and confusion and to ensure changes happen in a timely and optimal fashion.
- Are unclear on the structure of the MSD leadership and how the Executive works together.
- Enjoy the smaller group sessions and really valued HMS walking the floor to hear directly from him and have the opportunity to speak with him on a personal level.

Continues on next page.



RADM Steve Tiffen at Indo-Pacific 2023



Feedback and suggestion box

- Are interested in understanding higher level decision making on issues that they have direct involvement in, especially where the direction of travel is often counter to the advice provided (instituting a feedback loop).
- Are less interested in reading long emails from the Executive (sorry this is the exception 😊)

Some initiatives that will be kicked off in this first quarter of the year include:

- **Feedback/Suggestion boxes** are being sent to the regions to be placed in prominent areas allowing staff to anonymously provide feedback, suggestions or ask questions. As HMS discussed during his visits, these boxes will be made available for the entire year, with the box being cleared on a monthly basis so HMS and/or Branch Heads can address.
- Development of a forward-plan for **HMS to work remotely in each region** to facilitate being more accessible to personnel. This plan will coincide with visits by Deputy Secretary Naval Shipbuilding and Sustainment to the region.
- An **MSD Executive Town Hall** where personnel can dial in and hear from HMS and Branch Heads in relation to strategic direction, organisational change updates and broad issues impacting personnel. It will intentionally be a one-way transmission to allow key information to be disseminated to personnel, but staff will be able to send questions through which will be answered in a timely manner following the Town Hall.

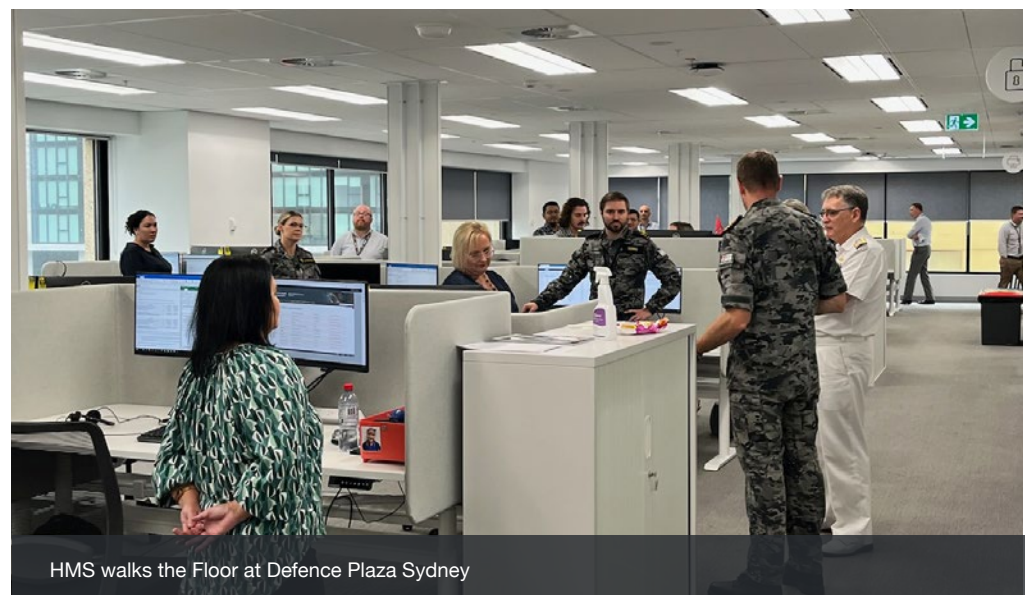
More information on these initiatives and others will be provided via your Branch Heads in the coming weeks.



HMS addresses MARSPT personnel in Sydney



HMS in Darwin



HMS walks the Floor at Defence Plaza Sydney



HMS with OPV SPO in WA



HMS with ACSSPO personnel at Garden Island, Sydney

RMC West celebrates one year of operations

Twelve months have passed since Naval Ship Management (NSM), now operating as Babcock Australia, secured the RMP contract in Western Australia. This collaborative and integrated approach supports the delivery of continuous sustainment to the complex naval capability in the region. This partnership also supports Australian industry through job opportunities, removing barriers to entry into the defence maritime sector and providing more certainty for them to plan and invest.

In the past year, RMC West has achieved significant milestones, experiencing substantial growth in the enterprise organisational structure, and fostering successful collaboration as one cohesive team. The RMC embarked on its first maintenance period as an integrated team, in December 2023.

The other momentous occasion included the opening of the Navy Capability Centre in late October, which will house the System Program Offices, Groups, and the integrated workforce moving forward. The Navy Capability Centre is another step towards providing an integrated and consistent approach to continuous sustainment and optimising regional ports and local industries working collaboratively to ensure future Navy can fight and win at sea.



RMC-West Enterprise Staff

Patrol Boat Enterprise expands

As the Armidale class patrol boats wind their way to retirement and decommissioning, we have accepted into service five of the eight replacement Cape class vessels with the sixth planned to be delivered in Q1, 2024. The final two vessels will come into service later in 2024.

Acquisition and acceptance of the new vessels has progressed smoothly with the sixth vessel soon to transition to Darwin as its home port. The Cape class fleet is performing well with the initial vessels now going through their first 12 monthly maintenance periods to iron out any outstanding minor warranty issues.

All vessels have been welcomed as an additional capability to maintain Navy requirements in service.

Cape class vessels currently in operational service include: ADV Cape Otway, ADV Cape Peron, ADV Cape Naturaliste, ADV Cape Capricorn and ADV Cape Woolamai.



ADV Cape Otway

It's all happening in the North East!

Let's get Kraken!

Recently the Hydrographic Systems Program Office (HSPO), Kraken Robotics, Navy and a team of contractors installed the innovative Kraken Katfish Synthetic Aperture Sonar system onto Hydrographic Ship HMAS *Leeuwin*.

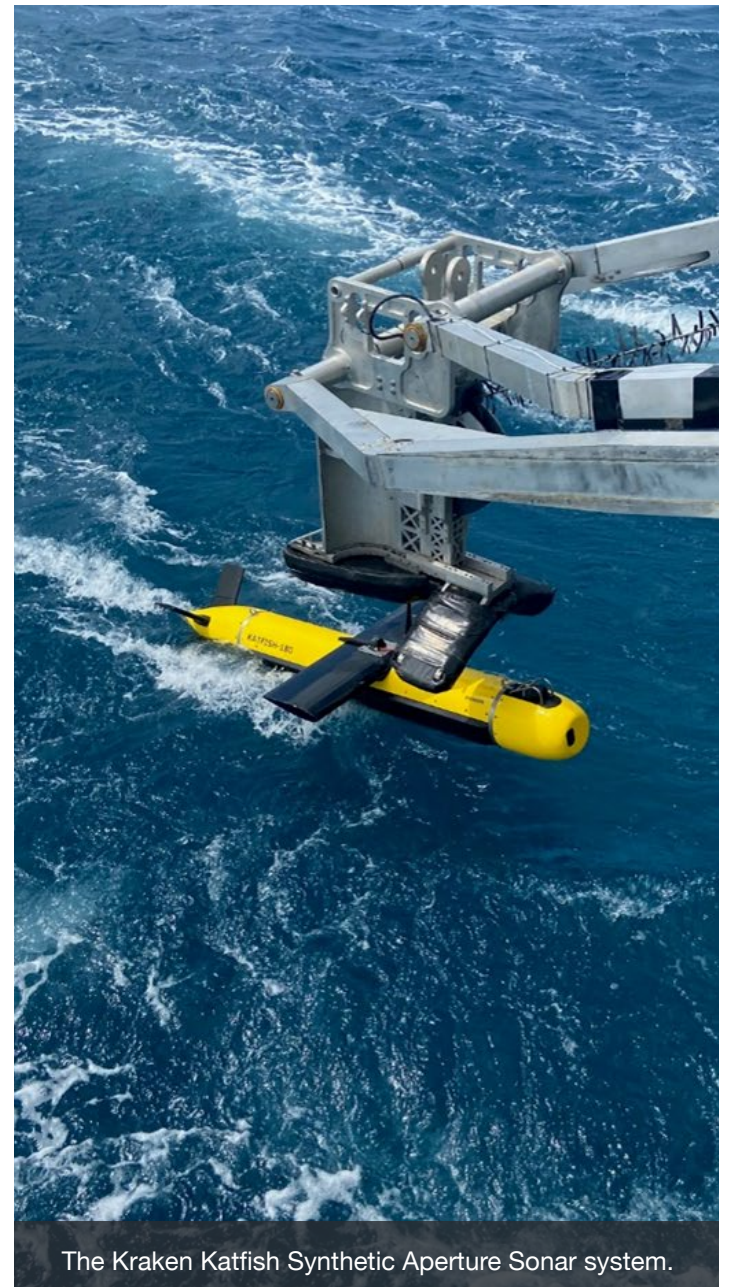
Following a successful capability demonstration in Cockburn Sound in February 2023, the team were challenged as part of a rapid acquisition program to conceptualise, develop and successfully install the new sonar underwater imaging technology. And they did so in less than three months – an incredible achievement!

The scope of the concept was to prove the design, install and set to work this leading edge capability in a compressed timeframe with all stakeholders including HSPO, Navy and industry involved. The team was empowered to adopt innovative practices without compromising the safety of our teams and sailors and the seaworthiness of HMAS *Leeuwin*. The installation was conducted in parallel to the planned maintenance activity without detrimental effect on schedule and with full support from local industry. While the team quickly and diligently implemented the capability, they did not compromise on ensuring the ship was able to perform its mission and bring her sailors home safe.

Currently, HMAS *Leeuwin* is on deployment, surveying the sea around Australia. The survey work is used to keep vessels safer as they navigate these waters.

Successfully and rapidly deploying this leading edge capability demonstrates that NSSG and Navy, together with industry, can respond when needed to deliver.

Thanks to our Kracken team partners!



The Kraken Katfish Synthetic Aperture Sonar system.

Handover Ceremony of FSS Bethwel Henry

On 28 August 2023, representatives from Australia and Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) gathered at HMAS *Stirling* to commemorate the delivery of the latter's new Guardian class Patrol Boat, FSS Bethwel Henry. FSS Bethwel Henry is the 16th vessel built and delivered under Australia's Pacific Maritime Security Program and is the second vessel built and delivered for FSM.

The handover ceremony was attended by both Deputy Prime Minister (DPM), the Hon Richard Marles MP and Vice President (VP) of FSM, the Hon Aren B Palik. The official proceedings concluded with the signing of the commemorative certificate and ribbon cutting.

The Hon Aren B Palik noted that the program was one of the most successful foreign policy instruments that the Australian Government had implemented, to which the Hon Richard Marles responded that he was honoured to see the FSS Bethwel Henry as an enduring symbol of friendship between the two countries.

The FSM Patrol Boat is named after the late Hon Bethwel Henry, the first speaker of the FSM Congress, and present at the ceremony, were his two daughters. It was an unforgettable and significant moment for both daughters to witness their father's legacy being honoured on an international stage.

Sourced: PMSP 09-2023 Newsletter



VIP guests and the FSM crew during the handover ceremony at HMAS *Stirling*, WA

It's all happening in the North East!

Cairns Team gathers for RUOK? Day

On 14 September, personnel from the Pacific Patrol Boat SPO, Patrol Boat SPO (Cairns), HSPO and RMC North East all came together at the Cook Street office in Cairns for an RUOK? Day morning tea.

Attendees showcased their culinary skills, including creatively themed RUOK? Day cupcakes. Assistant Secretary Specialist Systems (AS-SS), Helen Loundes, delivered the RUOK? Day presentation. She emphasised the importance of addressing psychosocial, physical, environmental, and lifestyle stressors and the significance of supporting one another not just on this day but every day of the year.

RUOK? Day serves as a reminder to take a moment for self-care and engage in meaningful conversations. The morning tea provided a break from everybody's busy schedules, and it highlighted the importance of checking in with one another and taking the time out to recharge in our own lives.

For more information on RUOK? visit www.ruok.org.au/



Cairns team gathers at the Cook Street office for a combined RUOK? Day morning tea.

Business Liaison Association's, 2023 Cairns Youth and Careers Expo

On 24 August 2023, the Business Liaison Association's Cairns and Youth Careers Expo transformed the Fred Moule Pavilion into a dynamic hub of inspiration. RMP North East, NORSTA Maritime, joined their Commonwealth RMC colleagues as well as NORSHIP Marine, Tropical Reef Shipyard, Austal Australia and various supply chain businesses to showcase opportunities in the local maritime sector.

This expo bridged the gap between education and industry, bringing together 4,000 secondary students representing 33 secondary schools across the region. The integrated RMC North East team guided these students through diverse career opportunities and pathways in the maritime industry. The Expo highlighted the power of collaboration, paving the way for a new generation of maritime professionals.



(L to R): Joshua McLeish NORSTA Maritime Pty Ltd, Adrian Raats NORSTA Maritime Pty Ltd, Djarragun College Students, Joe Aloisio NORSTA Maritime Pty Ltd.

It's all happening in the North East!

Maritime Moves for the Future

This quarter RMP North East, NORSTA Maritime, organised and led a shipyard visit as part of an RMC Enterprise Activity, promoting collaboration between industry and academia. The visit between the RMP and Professors Bouchra Senadji and Nico Adams of James Cook University (JCU) provided opportunity for discussion on NORSHIP's operations and potential collaboration with JCU, as well as Professors Senadji and Adams sharing JCU's expertise and programs to support the local maritime industry.



(L to R): Professor Bouchra Senadji, Head of Engineering for the College of Science and Engineering at JCU; Professor Nico Adams, Chair of Digital Innovation and Internet of Things (IoT) and Associate Dean of Industry and Innovation, College of Science and Engineering, JCU; and Stuart Hodgson, Operations Manager - Defence - North East, NORSHIP Marine Pty Ltd.

RMC Directors visit Cairns

RMC Directors across the network gathered in Cairns from 11-14 September to advance the objectives of Plan Galileo. The group evaluated progress by the integrated RMC North East, emphasising the Australian Industry Capability Plan.

Key Enterprise Stakeholders such as Cairns Regional Council, Queensland Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, and James Cook University (JCU), gave presentations that enriched the depth of discussions, contributing their perspectives and expertise. A notable focus was placed on developing the Enterprise, a fundamental component in building the capabilities of RMC North East. This underscores the collective effort required to drive industrial growth and fulfil the overarching objectives of Plan Galileo. Plan Galileo, with RMC North East as the first operational unit, highlighted the strategic significance of Cairns in driving industrial growth.



(L to R): Nick Masasso and Samuel Doyle-Wiaczek, Cairns Regional Council; Arvind Tyagi, DRMC-East; Colin Ford, NORSTA Maritime Pty Ltd; CAPT Thomas Kenny, DRMC-West; Wendy Hughes and Councillor Bob Manning OAM, Mayor, Cairns Regional Council; Fraser Pritchard-Davies, DRMC National, Andrew Hayes, NORSTA Maritime; CMDR Benjamin Brown, DDDG SPO; Andrew Davies, DRMC-North; Darren Cordwell, Commercial Manager, RMC North East; and, Benjamin Clarke DRMC-North East



(L to R): CMDR Sara Barnett (HM-CMR), Greg Laxton (BAE – Maritime Lead), Lee Ann Jones (Director – Hydrographic SPO), Cade Dawkins (BAE – Program Director), Helen Loundes (Assistant Secretary Specialist Systems – Maritime Sustainment Division).

Celebrating the end of a 15-year partnership between BAE and HSPO

On 31 October 2023, Delivery Director Sustainment, BAE Systems, Greg Laxton, and AS-SS, Helen Loundes, joined with members of the BAE Systems Hydrographic In-Service Support Contract (HISSC), HSPO and Hydrographic and Meteorological and Oceanographic Group personnel to celebrate the end of a successful fifteen-year partnership with BAE Systems delivering sustainment capability of the Hydrographic Fleet to support Navy requirements.

The morning tea was a celebration and recognition of the collective trust, experience, skill, and determination that enabled the teams to achieve success under the HISSC. There was acknowledgment that every time the goalposts moved, BAE Systems stepped up and partnered with HSPO to achieve and deliver our desired outcomes. Additionally, the celebration was a recognition of the finalisation of HISSC as the end of an era for the enterprise. HSPO presented BAE with a plaque in recognition of the fifteen years' partnership.



(L to R): CAPT Angela Bond, Defence Industry Pathway Program (DIPP) Defence Lead with Darren Cordwell and Benjamin Clarke of RMC-North East and maritime industry stakeholder representatives covering RMC-North East, NORSTA Maritime (RMP), James Cook University, TAFE Queensland and Defence Industry.

Captain Angela Bond in Cairns

Navy Captain Angela Bond, Defence Industry Pathways Program (DIPP) Defence lead, visited RMC North East in September to engage with maritime stakeholders and promote the Certificate III in DIPP. Given the rising demand for skilled workers in shipbuilding and sustainment, the maritime industry recognises the need to expand its workforce and the program is proving a success in support of this. Warrant Officer Danny Taylor, Capability Engagement at RMC North-East, has been instrumental in driving this initiative locally.

New contracts optimise Navy capability in the East

In Q4 2023, two eastern-based contracts have given sustainment of Navy's surface fleet a major boost. On Monday 6 November, Thales Australia was awarded a seven-year contract to operate as the RMP within the newly established RMC East at Garden Island Defence Precinct in Sydney, Australia.

On 1 December, a second contract with Thales Australia was signed, appointing them to the role of Captain Cook Graving Dock Operation and Reticulated Services Contractor (DORSC).

The RMP contract ensures the coordination of maintenance for Navy's surface vessels in the region and the development of resilient local and regional supply chains.

Thales, has the responsibility for operating and maintaining the Captain Cook Graving Dock in its unique function as one of Australia's largest strategic national assets. Thales will provide specialist docking and reticulated services as an input to RMP East ship maintenance activities.

HMS, RADM Steve Tiffen spoke about this significant development, emphasising the importance of RMC East's role, and that of the Dock.

"Achievement of these milestones contributes to Defence's new national approach to sustainment in support of Continuous Naval Shipbuilding. In partnership with Thales Australia, we are rising to meet the challenges of our evolving strategic situation, working to implement the recommendations of the Defence Strategic Review and ensuring Navy is optimised in Australia's immediate region," said RADM Tiffen.



(L to R): The Minister for Defence Industry, Minister for International Development and the Pacific, the Honourable Pat Conroy MP (left), Head of Maritime Sustainment, Rear Admiral Steve Tiffen, AM, CSM, RAN (centre) and Country Director & Chief Executive Officer of Thales Australia, Mr Jeff Connolly speak together at Fleet Base East Defence Precinct, Sydney, NSW.

Welcoming our North Regional Maintenance Provider

The fourth RMC in the network has been kicked off with the awarding of the contract for the RMP North. NORSTA North Pty Ltd was awarded the five-year maintenance contract at a signing event in Darwin on 4 December 2023.

At the signing, RADM Steve Tiffen said the contract was an important Australian industry partnership which would lift Defence capability in the North. "Having an RMC in Darwin offers a strategic advantage due to its geographic location in northern Australian and its proximity to key operating areas for Navy, Army, and our coalition partners," RADM Tiffen said.

The partnership with NORSTA North will allow maintenance to be conducted on all surface fleet vessels in the North including potentially those from allied nations. This will ensure these vessels can return to operations sooner and reduce large transit voyages to southern home ports. Initially, RMC North will support the sustainment of Navy's Cape class patrol boats.

The Commonwealth is actively engaged in efforts to establish efficient operations at each RMC, aiming to enhance organisational effectiveness and foster collaboration across the board.

RMC North is expected to provide a positive economic boost to Darwin and the surrounding northern region as opportunities in the sustainment supply chain will evolve, longer-term work packages will be increased as well as more employment and upskilling opportunities for industry.



Member for Solomon, Mr Luke Gosling OAM MP (Centre) with Chair of NORSTA Marine, Mr Maurie McNarn AO; Head Maritime Sustainment, Rear Admiral Steven Tiffen AM CSC RAN and Assistant Secretary Specialist Systems, Ms Helen Loundes (Right); and Defence Industry stakeholders at Regional Maintenance Centre North in Winnellie, Northern Territory.

Organisational Change Plan Stage One for MSD now in motion

Implementation of the MSD Organisational Change Plan (OCP) Stage One is now in motion. This includes recruitment to vacant positions, which will continue into mid-2024. Additionally, preparations for OCP Stage Two are already in progress. This includes residual positions identified within MSS (in the Branch's Decision Brief to HMS signed 13 Nov) and consideration of the Minor Vessel (MV) SPO. Outcomes from the Strategic review for MSD are likely to further refine MSD structures.

Stage One changes will mostly involve a 'lift and shift' of positions to different reporting lines – this means no impact to employees or their positions other than who they report to. All employees will continue to have an ongoing position, and no one will be required to relocate. No positions will be lost as a result of Stage One changes.

Key aspects of the plan include:

- Transition of SPO functions to RMC Network
- The existing Arafura class offshore patrol vessel Capability Life Cycle Manager (CLCM) contract being expanded to support other capabilities with HSPO commencing use of this multi-hull CLCM.
- Establishment of Maintenance Branch Executive.

You can access an FAQ Factsheet [here](#) which provides an overview of the plan and the changes.

Over the coming weeks, Directors will work with change-affected personnel to implement the plan. This will require adaptability and flexibility from each of us, both as individuals and as teams.

Our workforce is the first and most critical priority for Defence. We acknowledge the different impacts and uncertainty that comes with change. We encourage all personnel to engage in the change process, discuss within teams, and reach out to support services – for [APS](#) and [ADF](#) - when needed.

Staff seeking answers to questions or further clarification are asked to contact their Director. Brad Hopkins has moved on from the role of MSD Change Manager and Adam Purtell is now the MSD Change point of contact. You may therefore also direct your queries to Adam.Purtell@defence.gov.au or via the MSD Strategy inbox at msd.strategy@defence.gov.au

What's the latest on the MSD Strategy?

Since our last newsletter when we released an overview and snapshot of the MSD Strategy, we have been working to progress the full strategy based on feedback, and develop the associated Strategy Implementation Plan (SIP). This is so we can give our people an understanding of what the strategy might mean for particular business units and how we would propose to implement any changes.

Branch Heads will continue to reach out to relevant business areas on what some of the proposed changes in the Strategy and the SIP might mean for their respective areas. We then intend to release the strategy and draft implementation plan by the end of January 2024 and seek broad feedback on the implementation plan before finalising it and getting it underway. As the key documents to set the direction for the Division as we transform our operating and service delivery models, it is imperative that we get them right. Consultation with you is critically important, because we want to ensure a deep understanding of the division's strategic direction and we care about what you think - your continuing input is crucial to the Strategy's success.

The MSD Strategy will explain the division's role, its mission and vision, how it will operate, organisational design principles, the governance framework, culture - and what success looks like.

The accompanying SIP will translate the high-level strategic goals from the Strategy into actionable and well-defined steps. It will be a roadmap to guide the MSD organisation and stakeholders through realisation of the Strategy, ensuring a coordinated and successful execution.

We understand that change can often be challenging. We are creatures of habit and so many of us find that any change to our usual set of behaviours and actions that together create our 'comfort zone' can trigger a range of reactions. Re-wiring ourselves to be more comfortable with and open to change will allow us to be more change-capable which is an important skill.

Thank you once again for your valuable contributions. We look forward to working together to make positive changes that benefit all of us.

More Information:



Plan Galileo Intranet:

The Plan Galileo intranet has a range of information, including short videos which explain how the Maritime Sustainment Model will work in practice. Go to: drnet.defence.gov.au/casg/Plan_Galileo/



Plan Galileo External Website:

For those who don't have access to the intranet, there is also the external website and the Plan Galileo GovTeams page www1.defence.gov.au/business-industry/naval-shipbuilding/plan/galileo



Email:

For general MSD matters you can email nssg-msd-hms.correspondence@defence.gov.au. You can email plan.galileo@defence.gov.au with any questions in relation to Plan Galileo. You can also email the MSD Strategy inbox at: msd.strategy@defence.gov.au