

Long Island Council of the Navy League Hosts AUKUS Roundtable

Program focused on the US-Australian engagement under the trilateral security partnership between the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom

FARMINGVILLE, NY, UNITED STATES, October 17, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Corporate Committee of the Long Island Council of the Navy League in conjunction with Retlif Testing Laboratories (Ronkonkoma, NY, USA), sponsored a special AUKUS/Industry roundtable program on Wednesday, August 21st at the Holiday Inn Long Island Conference Center – Islip Arpt East (Holtsville) to discuss the relationship and partnerships between Long Island government contract manufacturers and the Australian government in support of its nuclear submarine program. The event, which drew more than 75 attendees, featured a roundtable discussion of government officials, headlined with a keynote address from Congressman Anthony D’Esposito (NY-04). The AUKUS roundtable and meeting was first developed and facilitated by U.S. Representative Nick LaLota (NY-01).



Navy League Logo

Moderated by Michael Griffin, Government Affairs/Navy League Corporate Committee, the objective of the roundtable was to educate the industrial base on AUKUS and its opportunities, present the pillars of AUKUS, and identify next steps for the industry level partnerships and how Long Island contract manufacturers can become suppliers and provide resources.

“When companies and our countries come together, we are infinitely stronger and more successful,” said Walter Poggi, Navy League Corporate Committee Chairman and President/CEO of Retlif Testing Laboratories, who delivered the opening remarks for the program. “Everyone in

this room works in partnership towards a common interest in building our country's defense."

Congressman Anthony D'Esposito delivered the keynote address and mentioned many of the topics that would be expanded on by the panel, as well as its ties to the local area of Long Island. "Long Island will be an important partner in this project," D'Esposito shared. "Both by receiving substantial benefits from this international collaboration and making significant contributions to AUKUS. This partnership will build lasting relationships between the U.S. and Australian suppliers, which will drive innovation, create efficiencies, and open new markets for Long Island companies."



(L-R) Navy League Corporate Committee Chairman and Retlif President and CEO Walter Poggi, U.S. Navy SIB Strategy and Implementation Joelle Schmitz, AUKUS Integration and Acquisition Executive Director Meganne Atkins, Senior Trade Investment Commissioner f

Roundtable panelists included: AUKUS Integration and Acquisition (I&A) Executive Director Meganne Atkins; Senior Trade Investment Commissioner/Austrade Paul Burfield; Minister-Counsellor AUKUS/Australian Embassy Phoebe Greentree; and SIB (Submarine Industrial-Base) Strategy and Implementation Joelle Schmitz. Each panelist gave a 20-minute overview on the significance of the alliance and relationship.

"The biggest challenge we face in our mission to protect our waters is the declining workforce supplying the parts and technical skills to build and maintain our submarines," said Meganne Atkins. "In the next 10 years, we expect seventy percent of the current workforce to retire. SIB has created workforce initiatives that pay to train interested individuals to ultimately serve their country in this unique and highly-skilled capacity."

Phoebe Greentree commented during the session that one of the critical ongoing efforts is for AUKUS to create agreements that support the necessary industry level sharing of information and technology which is a sustainment requirement of this partnership.

Much of the roundtable discussions centered around the advancement of Australia's nuclear submarine program and collaborating with Long Island suppliers to meet the country's goals of compliance, standards and the requirements necessary to power these ships. An industry Q&A session was held at the conclusion of the roundtable discussion, and one-on-one interactions continued between representatives of the Australian Embassy, AUKUS and Navy League

members during the post-event social gathering.

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