



# THE FAWCETT FLYER

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020



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Each year in November, Australians commemorate Remembrance Day at the 11th hour on the 11th day to remember the 102,800 Australians who made the ultimate sacrifice across wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations. With COVID-19 restrictions in place, 2020 commemorations were different to years past and required physical distancing to be adhered to in order to take place. As Remembrance Day in 2020 coincided with a parliamentary sitting week, I attended the commemoration event in Parliament House's Great Hall.

With 2020 drawing to a close, December's two parliamentary sitting weeks provided the Government with the final opportunity of the year to pass legislation, including the Foreign Relations Bill (*more on Page 2*), among others. In 2020, the Government has passed 130 Bills, despite the challenges of COVID-19, including dozens of Bills which provided financial support for Australians who have been impacted by the pandemic.

This year, the Government has delivered tax relief which is now increasing take-home pay for approximately 790,000 South Australians, supported 3.8 million Australians through the JobKeeper program, supported 412,543 people through the National Disability Insurance Scheme, finalised or enacted 5 export agreements including PACER Plus and the RCEP Agreement (*more on Page 7*), as well as adding 246 new and updated medicine listings to the PBS, among other significant initiatives.

Australia's economic recovery is underway and will continue into 2021. Over the past 6 months, Australia's economy has added 734,400 jobs, and now approximately 85% of the jobs lost due to COVID-19 have returned. Australia has retained its AAA credit rating and Australia's GDP grew 3.3% in the September quarter – further reassurance that our economy is bouncing back. Our GDP is forecast to grow by 4.5% in 2021 and our unemployment rate is expected to fall to 6.25% by approximately mid-to-late 2022. While 2021 may still prove to be challenging, our economy has demonstrated its resilience through the most severe economic crisis since the Great Depression.

For more information on these or other matters of a Federal nature, please contact my office via the details available on the back cover.

I wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and trust that we will all have a healthy, secure and prosperous 2021.

Kind regards,

**SENATOR DAVID FAWCETT**



# PROTECTING AUSTRALIA'S 2 NATIONAL INTERESTS

In the final parliamentary sitting weeks of 2020, the Senate passed the Foreign Relations Bill 2020 - created to ensure agreements with foreign nations entered into by state and territory governments, local councils or public universities comply with Australia's Federal foreign policy and national security framework.

This legislation aligns all three tiers of government and public universities on national issues to ensure any agreements are consistent with our foreign policy and the interests of Australians are protected. The Bill allows the Federal Government, through the Foreign Minister, to reject agreements which adversely affect Australia's foreign relations or are inconsistent with our foreign policy.

As a member of the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee, I contributed to the Committee's Inquiry into this Bill. The Committee's recommendations - following consultation with a wide range of stakeholders - resulted in the Government making 2 subsequent amendments, ensuring the bill is fit-for-purpose.

Alongside the Foreign Relations Bill

2020, the Government's Foreign Investment Reform (Protecting Australia's National Security) Bill 2020 passed parliament in December. Commencing in January, these reforms ensure our foreign investment framework keeps pace with emerging risks and global developments - the most significant reforms to the Foreign Acquisitions and Takeovers Act 1975 in nearly 50 years.

This Bill requires foreign investors to seek approval for all investments in sensitive national security land or businesses (including starting such a business), regardless of value; and be subject to enhanced monitoring and investigation powers, as well as stronger and more flexible enforcement options and penalties. Australia continues to welcome foreign investment for the significant benefits it provides, while also ensuring such investments are not contrary to the national interest.

For more information on the committee's report on the Foreign Relations Bill, click [here](#) or scan the QR Code below.



### 3 COMMITTEE UPDATE



Delivering the tabling statement for JSCFADT's COVID-19 implications Inquiry in the Senate

Within the committees of which I have membership – as Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade (JSCFADT), and as a member of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security (PJICIS), among others – November and December have proven to be busy months.

This month in my role as Chair of JSCFADT, I tabled the Committee's report on the Inquiry into the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for Australia's foreign affairs, defence and trade, in the Senate (*pictured, above*).

Following 15 hearings held over the course of this Inquiry, the report concludes a systemic approach is

needed to identify and manage risk to ensure Australia has resilience across key enablers such as health, defence, transport and food sectors.

The COVID-19 pandemic has removed any doubt that the efficient and effective functioning of some critical systems are reliant on the integrity of supply chains which we currently do not control, and which may be subject to disruption.

Through government partnering with industry to reduce or eliminate such vulnerabilities in critical supply chains, Australia can be better prepared in the face of future threats.

Also in my capacity as Chair, I tabled

the Human Rights Sub-Committee report on their Inquiry into whether Australia should examine the use of targeted sanctions to address human rights abuses, which considered submissions from over 160 individuals and organisations from around the world.

The Committee scrutinized the options available to the Australian Government in relation to sanctions, and ultimately recommended the Australian Government follow the lead of like-minded nations such as the US and UK, and most recently the EU, to enact Magnitsky-style targeted sanctions along with 32 other recommendations.

Introducing Magnitsky-style legislation would enable the Australian Government to impose travel restrictions and freeze assets – functioning both punitively and as a deterrent for those engaging in such acts.

Cooperation with like-minded nations on this matter has the potential to protect the human rights of countless citizens around the world.

In November, PJCIS has added a new inquiry into the national security risks affecting the Australian higher education and research sector, and completed another, reporting on the review of the mandatory data retention regime.

This report included 22

recommendations which propose an increase to transparency around the use of the mandatory data retention, increase the threshold for when data can be accessed by law enforcement and intelligence agencies, as well as to reduce the currently very broad access to telecommunications data under the Telecommunications Act, among other recommendations.

In addition to the completion of the review of the mandatory data retention regime, PJCIS has reported on the review of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) Amendment Bill 2020, which seeks to amend the compulsory questioning framework currently in the ASIO Act.

The review recommends the Bill be passed, however only following implementation of 8 recommendations made by the committee. These include introducing a sunset clause and legislating a PJCIS review to consider the effectiveness and implications of the powers, among others.

To view my tabling statement for JSCFADT's COVID-19 implications Inquiry, click [here](#) or scan the QR Code below.



## NAVAL SHIPBUILDING PLAN ON TRACK



Ongoing defence and shipbuilding projects are creating opportunities for the Australian businesses involved and strengthening our local supply chains – creating and sustaining Australian jobs – while protecting our national and security interests.

Marking the beginning of the prototyping phase in December, I attended the official steel cutting for Australia's 9 new Hunter Class Frigates alongside my parliamentary colleagues (*pictured, above*).

A major milestone for the SA-built Hunter Class Frigates, this phase will see 5 prototype blocks built to test the production systems, develop the facilities and ensure the workforce is trained to a high

standard.

Announced in June, Australia's BlueScope Steel is delivering more than 1,500 tonnes of steel plate used to construct the 5 prototype ship blocks.

At Osborne South Naval Shipyard, Australian Naval Infrastructure completed handover to ASC Shipbuilding – lead contractor for the Hunter Class Frigate Program – in early December, ahead of the prototyping phase commencement.

In December, the Royal Australian Navy's newest fleet of 3 Air Warfare Destroyers – built here in Adelaide, at the Osborne Naval Shipyard – have exercised together for the first time (*pictured, Page 6*).

HMA Ships Hobart, Brisbane and Sydney comprise Navy's most capable warships to date and one of the world's most capable multi-mission ships.

Undertaken to test and develop their cooperative air surface and warfare capabilities, these exercises demonstrated the fleet's interoperability and capacity to respond to a more complex and contested maritime zone.



These 3 naval vessels are the latest example of an Australian-produced capability being available to respond, when needed, to keep Australians safe and defend our national interests.

Lead contractor for the Australian Government's Attack Class Submarine Program, Naval Group Australia, has recently attracted more than 100 applications from Australian businesses wishing to be part of the first 'Local Manufacturing Package' – worth approximately

\$900 million.

This Package, made possible through the Government's investment in the Future Submarine Program, will provide contracts to Australian businesses for the manufacture of 23 major components for the regionally superior 12 Attack Class Submarines – to be built at the Osborne North Naval Shipyard.

I also recently joined Defence Minister Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds and State and Federal Government representatives at the official opening of Naval Group Australia's new office in Port Adelaide (*pictured, Page 10*).

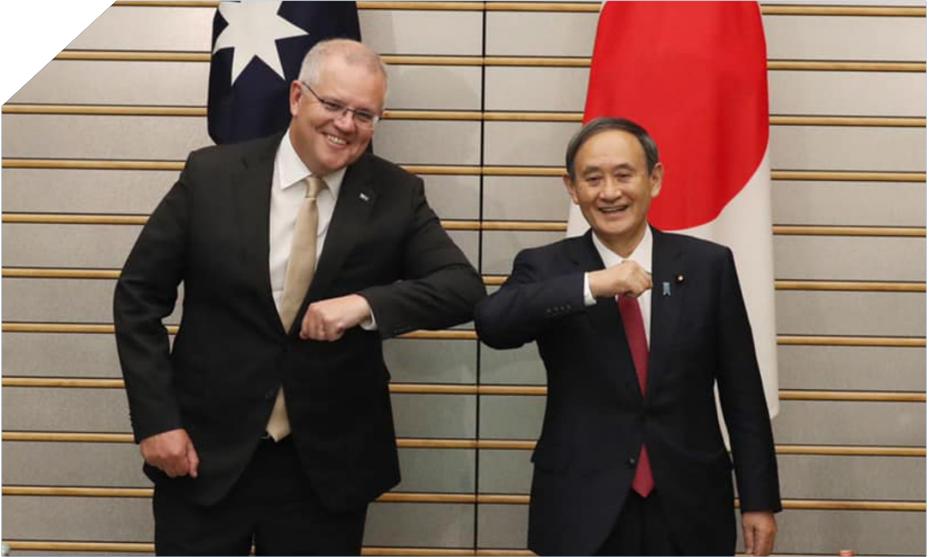
These offices have been built to accommodate up to the 350 administrative and management staff expected at the peak of the submarine build.

Throughout the Attack Class build program, Naval Group's workforce is expected to increase to over 1,700 direct jobs by 2028, providing thousands more indirect jobs along supply chains.

For more information on the Hunter Class Frigate's prototyping phase, click [here](#) or scan the QR code below.



# MORRISON GOVERNMENT COMMITTED TO A SECURE REGION



As the Indo-Pacific region experiences the most consequential strategic realignment in almost 80 years, Australia is taking proactive steps to secure bilateral and multilateral agreements that provide for our region's continued freedom, openness, security, inclusivity and stability.

In a post-pandemic world, the value of strong trade and defence partnerships with like-minded nations should not be underestimated.

On the 16th November, 14 Indo-Pacific nations joined Australia in signing the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement – representing the combined GDP of

\$26.2 trillion and constituting the largest trade agreement in history. Signatory nations include those in the Association of South East Asian Nations (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) and ASEAN's free trade agreement partners (Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand and Republic of Korea).

RCEP provides certainty and consistency for the trading of goods and services, investment, economic and technical cooperation in the fastest growing region in the world.

It also provides a common set of rules and improved mechanisms for electronic commerce, intellectual property, government procurement,

competition and small and medium sized enterprises. Australia is working towards ratification of the RCEP in 2021.

Additionally, the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations Plus (PACER Plus) entered into force in December – signed by Australia, New Zealand and nine Pacific Island nations.

PACER Plus provides an avenue to improve regional security, stability and prosperity, by delivering targeted and responsive technical assistance to help Pacific island countries benefit from trade, alongside commercial opportunities for Australian exporters and investors in a range of sectors.

Despite the ongoing disruption to global logistics as a result of COVID-19, Australia achieved a record trade surplus for the 2019/20 financial year of \$77.4 billion, assisted by the Government's strong focus on growing our export market opportunities.

With 1 in 5 Australian jobs reliant on trade, our Government remains committed to ensuring 90% of Australia's trade is covered by free trade agreements (FTA) by 2022 to boost opportunities and the competitiveness of Australian businesses in the global market.

Ongoing negotiations continue with the UK, EU, Pacific Island nations and India regarding FTAs, adding to deals reached since 2013 by the

Federal Liberal Government with Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, Peru, and Indonesia, among others.

New defence partnerships are also proving vital for continued stability and security throughout the Indo-Pacific. Japan and Australia have now formalised a landmark defence treaty – the Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA).

Building on our partnership of mutual trust, shared values and interests, the RAA will facilitate increased interoperability and cooperation between the Australian Defence Force and Japan Self Defense Forces, as we work towards common security objectives.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison visited Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga in November (*pictured, top Page 7*) – the first foreign leader to visit Prime Minister Suga since his appointment.

The RAA will enable the streamlining of defence deployment arrangements including through joint military training exercises, natural disaster and humanitarian support operations.

For more information on the RCEP Agreement, click [here](#) or scan the QR code below.



# OUT AND ABOUT



Great to be with Premier Steven Marshall and Governor of South Australia, His Excellency The Hon Hieu Van Le for the announcement of South Australian of the Year for 2021 - Tanya Hosch (*top*), Local Hero of the Year for 2021 - Russell Ebert OAM (*bottom*), Senior South Australian of the Year - Professor Richard Bruggemann, and Young South Australian of the Year – Isobel Marshall (*middle*).



In December, I represented the Parliament at the brief ceremony to mark the transfer of responsibility for NATO representation in Australia from Canada to the embassies of the Republic of Croatia and of the Kingdom of the Netherlands as the NATO Contact Point Embassies in 2021. Alongside Her Excellency Ms Betty Pavelich, Ambassador of Croatia; His Excellency Mr Mark Glauser, High Commissioner for Canada; and Her Excellency Mrs Marion Derckx, Ambassador for the Kingdom of the Netherlands.



Good to join Paula Luethen MP, the Hon John Dawkins MLC and Deputy Mayor Damian Wyld (*pictured*) for City of Tea Tree Gully Council's Citizenship Ceremony.



I joined Federal and State parliamentary representatives at the opening Naval Group Australia's new Port Adelaide office – home to an initial group of 250 employees and accommodating up to 350 administrative and management staff as the Attack Class Submarine build peaks.



Following Remembrance Day, I attended the rededication of Mount Barker's Avenue of Honour by Governor of South Australia, His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AC, with my senate colleague Senator Andrew McLachlan CSC (*pictured*) and local state member Dan Cregan.



After a delayed start due to COVID-19, the second group of veterans to take on the "Setting a New Course" sailing program officially completed the course and achieved their qualification, accredited by the Royal Yachting Association, in November. The final phase of the program sees team members out on the water for several days, putting their newly learned skills to the test.



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