



Australian Government

# The Hon Peter Dutton MP

Minister for Home Affairs  
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 Media release

## Securing Australia's borders for the future

Drones prowling Australia's far flung ocean boundaries, undersea sensors monitoring shipping movements around our coastlines – this could be the future of maritime surveillance to secure Australia's vast ocean borders against future threats.

Scoping is underway to deliver the next generation of maritime surveillance capability through the Future Maritime Surveillance Capability project.

The project will identify the best and latest capabilities for the Australian Border Force, as part of the national maritime surveillance capability. This will include developing technologies to be added to Australia's existing national border surveillance capabilities of satellite and radar surveillance and air and marine patrols.

These new capabilities will build on the significant investment already made by the Australian Government to secure Australia's maritime borders through national capabilities such as the MQ-4C Triton remotely piloted aircraft (initial \$1.4 billion investment) and the P-8A, Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft (\$5 billion).

Maritime security threats are likely to increase in complexity and severity such as renewed irregular migration and people trafficking, exploitation by transnational organised crime and its possible collaboration with extremist groups.

The Morrison Government is determined to ensure Australia's border security is maintained against these evolving threats.

The Minister for Home Affairs Peter Dutton said the project will deliver new cutting edge technology to respond to current and emerging civil maritime threats to Australia.

"We know that the existing Australian maritime surveillance system will not be capable of meeting changes in the threat environment that are anticipated in the future," Mr Dutton said.

"Transnational organised crime – including drug smuggling and people smuggling – is a constant threat to our civil maritime security. Such activities are only likely to increase in future.

"Transnational crime groups have the ability to acquire and deploy the latest technology to further their criminal activities.

"It is imperative that we respond to this challenge with the latest technology and solutions available.

"We saw what happened under the last Labor Government where borders were thrown open and people smugglers virtually had unfettered access to Australia, delivering 50,000 Illegal Maritime Arrivals."

The Department of Home Affairs has today launched a formal Request for Information from industry to better understand the potential capability, technology and commercial options available.

The project will deliver capability progressively and aims to achieve full capability by the end of 2024 with final cost and timing to be determined following the Department's engagement with industry.

In the months ahead, the Department will consult with industry and government partners, conduct risk reduction activities that may include studies, trials and independent evaluations and then move towards a competitive procurement process.

Mr Dutton said that the project will enable Australia's border protection to effectively deter, prevent and respond to border threats.

"We are looking for a balanced national capability that is integrated across ABF, Defence and other government agencies' capacity in the maritime domain."

"This project is critical to maintaining secure borders and will contribute directly to the prosperity, security and unity of the nation."

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