

Senate Standing Committees on Economics - References

Australia's sovereign naval shipbuilding capability -

COMMITTEE INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Defence

Topic: SERC – Q2 – Australia's sovereign naval shipbuilding capability – 5 Feb 2021
Australian Industry Plan. Gallacher

Question reference number: 2

Senator / Member: Alex Gallacher

Type of question: Spoken

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 19 February 2021

Question:

Senator PATRICK: Thank you. We'll continue on. I'd like to now table a document, which is the Australian industry plan—capability plan—provided to the Commonwealth under a tender. It has been released to me—and I know you know this, Mr Sammut—under FOI. Hopefully there's no objection to me tabling this document and making it available to the witnesses, Chair?

I want to give you a bit of a history of this document. It is the subject of an order to the committee. Interestingly, this document has been provided separately under the Senate processes, and I can't table that document because you've asked it to be held confidential. I've got this document here, which I got under FOI—it's on the Defence Disclosure Log—and you have asked the Senate, this committee, to hold it confidential. Can someone explain that?

CHAIR: Can we get the decision-maker at least to explain how that protocol works?

Mr Sammut: I'm not aware. I acknowledge, Senator, we provided this to you first on 20 December 2019. So I'm not exactly sure why that was done, other than—

Mr Moriarty: We'll take that on notice.

Answer:

Defence is committed to transparency, informing public debate on Defence matters and supporting ongoing Parliamentary oversight of Defence business.

Of the 13 redacted industry plans released to the Committee, one had been previously released by Defence under the FOI Act (DCNS's [now Naval Group] tendered Australian Industry Plan). Documents released under the FOI Act are available in the public domain; Defence has requested the Committee to treat the remaining documents provided to them as sensitive.