

Webinar on

Advancing Australia-India Defence Industrial Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific

May 05, 2026
Tuesday

04:00 PM – 05:00 PM (IST)

8:30 PM – 09:30 PM (AEST)

Background Note

1. Background and Context

1.1 Australia-India defence relations have gained strategic importance in the Indo-Pacific amid rising geopolitical competition and growing maritime security concerns. While frameworks like the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership have strengthened cooperation, there remains a need to operationalise them through deeper industrial and technological collaboration. Leveraging India’s manufacturing strengths and Australia’s technological capabilities offers significant opportunities in underwater, cyber, and aerospace domains, while addressing regulatory and supply chain challenges will be key to advancing a more integrated and capability-driven partnership.

1.2 The webinar on “Advancing Australia-India Defence Industrial Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific” is conceived as a strategic follow-up to the Australia-India Defence Industry Business Roundtable held in Sydney on 10 October 2025, which marked an important step forward in bilateral defence engagement. The ministerial-level roundtable brought together stakeholders from government, industry, academia, and the strategic community, and underscored the need to move beyond a transactional buyer-seller approach towards a more integrated model based on co-development, co-production, and long-term capability partnerships. It also identified key priority areas for cooperation, including underwater technologies, cyber defence, artificial intelligence, quantum systems, and space capabilities.

1.3 The roundtable’s key takeaways - particularly in underwater and cyber cooperation, defence manufacturing, and aerospace R&D - are carried forward into this webinar to identify actionable pathways. It also builds on the proposed Australia-India Defence Bridge.

1.3 In this context, CUTS International proposes to organise an Australia-India Defence Industry Business Roundtable in New Delhi in the coming months. To build a narrative around

this, CUTS International is organising a webinar that will provide further insights into Australia-India defence cooperation through expert perspectives.

2. Key Discussion Points

2.1. Underwater Defence Cooperation:

The Indo-Pacific's evolving security dynamics highlight the need to strengthen cooperation in underwater domain awareness, surveillance, and autonomous systems. The focus remains on enhancing interoperability and advancing joint R&D in critical maritime technologies.

2.2 Cyber Security and Cyber Defence:

As defence systems become increasingly digitised, cyber resilience is a key priority, with emphasis on AI, quantum technologies, and critical infrastructure protection. Cooperation will centre on joint cyber frameworks, information-sharing, and innovation across industry and research ecosystems.

2.2 Aerospace and Defence Manufacturing Ecosystem:

There is a clear shift towards co-development, co-production, and joint manufacturing, leveraging India's manufacturing base and Australia's technological strengths. Collaboration in aerospace, unmanned systems, and supply chains will be driven by an integrated ecosystem involving industry, MSMEs, academia, and R&D institutions.

3. Objectives

3.1 To examine the existing gaps and explore opportunities in defence domains such as cyber security, cyber defence, aerospace, and underwater systems between India and Australia.

3.2 To analyse the current state of India–Australia defence relations in emerging areas and assess the future scope of a joint defence manufacturing ecosystem and also to explore the evolving role of key stakeholders in both countries across underwater, cyber, aerospace, and defence research domains.

3.3 To assess whether existing frameworks and initiatives are effectively enabling co-development, co-production, and the development of a resilient defence industrial ecosystem between the two countries.

4. Expected Outcomes

4.1 Participants will gain insights into the evolving priorities and scope of India–Australia defence cooperation in the Indo-Pacific particularly in the area of cyber security and defence, aerospace, defence manufacturing ecosystem.

4.2 The webinar will provide recommendations for strengthening collaboration in key domains such as underwater defence, cyber security, and aerospace manufacturing, while supporting sustained bilateral engagement.