



The India-Australia Security Engagement

Opportunities and Challenges

David Brewster

**Senior Visiting Fellow
Maritime Studies**

Gateway House Research Paper No. 9, October 2013



भारतीय वैश्विक संबंध परिषद्

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Table of Contents

About the Author.....	1
Acknowledgements.....	3
List of Abbreviations.....	4
Summary.....	7
Introduction.....	12
Section One	
India's leadership role in the Indian Ocean region.....	14
1.1 India as a natural centre of gravity in the Indian Ocean.....	14
1.2 The shape of India's power in the Indian Ocean region.....	18
1.3 India's potential partners in the Indian Ocean.....	20
Section Two	
Australia's strategic perspectives on the Indian Ocean and India.....	26
2.1 Australia's security arrangements.....	26
2.2 The growing importance of the Indian Ocean region for Australia.....	28
2.3 Australia's defence relationships in the Indian Ocean.....	29
2.4 Changes in Australia's strategic perspectives.....	30
Section Three	
An overview of the India-Australia strategic relationship.....	32
3.1 Developments in the strategic relationship.....	32
3.2 Challenges in the relationship.....	38
3.3 Prospects for a security partnership.....	45
Section Four	
Opportunities for security cooperation.....	47
4.1 Security dialogues.....	47
4.2 Cooperation in Indian Ocean regional institutions.....	49

4.3 Cooperation in other international groupings.....	54
4.4 People-to-people contacts.....	56
4.5 Naval exercises and training.....	56
4.6 Humanitarian and Disaster Relief/Search and Rescue.....	60
4.7 Maritime Policing and Piracy.....	61
4.8 Maritime Border Protection and Maritime Domain Awareness.....	63
4.9 Cooperation between other military services.....	65
4.10 Defence technology cooperation.....	68
4.11 Antarctic research.....	70
Conclusion.....	72
References.....	75

About the Author

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List of Abbreviations

- AAD – Australian Antarctic Division
- ADC – Australia Defence College
- ADFA – Australia Defence Force Academy
- AMIS – Australian Maritime Identification System
- ANZUS – The Australia-New Zealand-United States Security Treaty
- APEC – Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
- ASEAN – Association of South East Asian Nations
- BPC – Border Protection Command (Australia)
- DoD – Department of Defence (Australia)
- DRDO – Defence Research and Development Organisation (India)
- DSTO – Defence Science and Technology Organisation (Australia)
- EEZ – Exclusive Economic Zone
- FMFD – Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue (India-Australia)
- HADR – Humanitarian and Disaster Relief
- IAF – Indian Air Force
- IN – Indian Navy
- IOC – Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
- IONS – Indian Ocean Naval Symposium
- IOR-ARC – Indian Ocean Rim-Association for Regional Cooperation
- ISR – Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
- MEA – Ministry of External Affairs (India)

- MoD – Ministry of Defence (India)
- NCAOR – National Centre for Antarctic and Oceanic Research (India)
- NCTC – National Counter Terrorism Centre (India)
- NEO – Non-combatant Evacuation Operation
- NMF – National Maritime Foundation (India)
- RAAF – Royal Australian Air Force
- RAN – Royal Australian Navy
- SAR – Search and Rescue
- UN – United Nations

The India-Australia Security Engagement

Opportunities and Challenges

Summary

1. General

- After decades of operating in separate strategic spheres, the strategic interests of India and Australia are increasingly aligned, particularly in relation to the Indian Ocean.
- It should not be assumed that this alignment can be easily translated into concrete security cooperation. There are still political, ideological, and cultural challenges in developing the relationship.
- The relationship is likely to take a long time to develop.

2. India's perspectives on the relationship

- ~~India~~ India views Australia as one of several new strategic partners in the Asia Pacific region, besides Japan, Singapore, Vietnam, and others.
- ~~Despite~~ Despite general recognition of shared interests, some in New Delhi are hesitant about moving too quickly in developing a relationship with Australia, partly because of its non-Asian character and its close security relationship with the U.S.
- ~~India~~ India views a security relationship with Australia through the lens of its concerns about the rise of China and a desire to develop strategic relationships with other states that have similar concerns.

3. Australia's perspectives on the relationship

- Australia recognises India as an important strategic partner in Asia and has taken most of the initiative in developing the

relationship over the last decade.

- Australia still needs to demonstrate to India that there are practical security problems that must be addressed in a cooperative manner and that India can better achieve its objectives in the Indian Ocean in cooperation with Australia.
- While mutual concerns about China are an important underlying element in the relationship, differences in perspectives on China will continue.
- In developing the relationship, Australia must move in a consistent and sustained manner and with a long-term horizon
- Australia may need to move past any immediate expectations of reciprocity in all aspects of the relationship.

4. Potential areas of security cooperation

Security dialogues

- A number of India-Australia bilateral dialogues have been established, but it will be a continuing challenge to give them substance.
- A trilateral security dialogue that includes the U.S. will be a major step forward in the relationship and can facilitate considerably greater coordination.
- Trilateral dialogues involving key regional states such as Indonesia will represent an important recognition of shared interests in regional security.

Cooperation within Indian Ocean regional groupings

- The Indian Ocean Rim-Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) grouping has many limitations, but can still be a potentially important focal point for India-Australia cooperation in the Indian Ocean region.
- The Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) is a valuable forum for interaction between navies. It can also be used as a platform for trilateral cooperation with other regional states.

Cooperation in other international groupings

- Consultations between India and Australia in the context of Asia Pacific regional groupings are likely to increase.
- There is scope for cooperation in WMD (weapons of mass destruction) anti-proliferation initiatives. Australia's involvement in the Australia Group (which it chairs) can be an opportunity to champion the inclusion of India in the Group and other international non-proliferation regimes.

People-to-people contacts

- An increase in personal relationships between Indian and Australian military and civilian officials should be a major focus in building the overall relationship.
- Australia should offer additional positions to Indian military officers as trainees and instructors in Australian military education institutions.
- Australia should also send more military officers and civilians to Indian military institutions and think tanks.

Naval exercises and training

- Australia can push for more Passing Exercises between Australian and Indian warships, perhaps even including multiple vessels, as a relatively easy way to promote greater interaction between the navies.
- Australia should make a significant commitment to regular bilateral exercises with the Indian Navy and press for Indian participation in Australian-hosted multilateral exercises such as Exercise Kakadu.
- Australia should offer India use of its Submarine Escape Training facility in Fremantle.
- In the long term, amphibious capabilities as part of a commitment to disaster relief could become an area of specialisation in the defence relationship.

Humanitarian and disaster relief/Search and rescue

- Humanitarian and disaster relief/ search and rescue activities may become a major focus of the relationship. These activities provide a relatively uncontroversial opportunity for increased interaction between the Indian and Australian navies.
- India and Australia should consider entering into formal arrangements with other concerned states to develop a cooperative system for responding to natural disasters in the Indian Ocean region.

Maritime policing and piracy

- Concerns over piracy in the eastern Indian Ocean have decreased in recent years, but any resurgence in piracy will be an immediate focal point for maritime security cooperation.
- Although there is potential for the Indian and Australian navies to coordinate their anti-piracy efforts in the northwest Indian Ocean, New Delhi may be resistant to changing current arrangements.
- There may also be scope for India and Australia to take a more proactive role in organising anti-piracy efforts in the region by developing a Memorandum of Understanding on Piracy among Indian Ocean states and other interested parties.

Maritime border protection and maritime domain awareness

- Maritime border protection is a major shared concern of India and Australia. There is significant scope for mutual learning about their responses to this issue.
- There is considerable scope for cooperation in improving maritime domain awareness (the tracking and identification of all maritime actors) in the eastern Indian Ocean. This could be pursued either on a bilateral basis or in cooperation with other key states such as Indonesia.

Cooperation between other military services

- The increased use of common platforms by the Indian and Australian air forces creates opportunities for interaction

on doctrine, training, and even maintenance. Bilateral air exercises might be a long-term goal.

- Given that India's maritime surveillance capabilities are largely operated through the Indian Naval Air Arm, the Royal Australian Air Force and Indian Navy should seek to develop a direct relationship.
- The opportunities for interaction between the Indian and Australian armies may be more limited. One potential focus area is cooperation in peacekeeping training and operations.

Defence technology cooperation

- Cooperation in defence technology is unlikely to become a major focus of the relationship.
- Problems with India's arms procurement system will limit the opportunities for cooperation between private companies for the foreseeable future.
- Opportunities for cooperation between India's Defence Research and Development Organisation and Australia's Defence Science and Technology Organisation should be explored.

Antarctic research

- The opening of India's new Bharati Station close to Australia's Antarctic activities creates considerable opportunities for cooperation in logistics and research.
- Cooperation in the Antarctic can be a concrete representation of shared interests in the broader Indian Ocean region.

The India-Australia Security Engagement Opportunities and Challenges

Introduction

In the coming years, the India-Australia relationship may well become one of the most significant security relationships in the Indian Ocean region. The two countries are the leading maritime powers of Indian Ocean states and there are expectations from inside and outside the region that they will take increasing responsibility for the security of the region. This paper considers how the two countries may work together as potential partners.

India and Australia share a language, a colonial past, many civil and political institutions, and democratic values. But despite these commonalities, they have long operated in largely separate strategic spheres. A non-aligned India was largely preoccupied with its immediate security problems in South Asia, while Australia traditionally focused on security concerns in East Asia and the Pacific.

These spheres of strategic interest are converging. The two countries now share many concerns, including over the growing impact of China on the strategic environment. The rise of India as a major regional power means that it is assuming greater security responsibilities in the Indian Ocean region and is starting to be seen as a significant strategic player in the Pacific. India is also beginning to see Australia as one of several new security partners in the Asia-Pacific region.

This paper explores the opportunities and challenges in the growing security relationship between India and Australia. It will discuss the evolution of their strategic roles, particularly in the Indian Ocean, and the changes in the relationship, before considering several concrete areas of security cooperation. The paper is divided into four sections:

Section 1 provides background on the evolution of India's strategic role in the Indian Ocean. It examines why India is likely to assume a regional leadership role. It then examines India's potential security partners in the region and why these partnerships will matter to India.

Section 2 gives an overview of Australia's strategic perspectives and its growing emphasis on Indian Ocean security.

Section 3 discusses the India-Australia strategic relationship. It summarises the evolution of the relationship over the last few decades and then gives an overview of some of the challenges and prospects in the further development of the relationship.

Section 4 considers several potential areas for enhanced security cooperation between Australia and India. It discusses areas that may be fruitful and how they can fit within the developing relationship.

Methodology: Many of the views and perceptions outlined in this paper, particularly in Sections 3 and 4, were compiled from confidential interviews conducted by the author with serving and retired military officers, diplomats, government officials, corporate executives, and academic and think tank commentators in India (in April and May 2013) and in Australia (in June and July 2013).

Section One

India's leadership role in the Indian Ocean region

1.1 India as a natural centre of gravity in the Indian Ocean

In coming years, India is likely to become a strategic centre of gravity in the Indian Ocean. This will have significant implications for India's regional security responsibilities and consequently also for India's strategic relationships within the region, including with Australia.

There are many reasons for seeing India as having a “naturally” dominant role in the region, at least over the long term. The geographic centrality of the Indian peninsula means that it physically dominates the entire northern Indian Ocean. Its massive population provides the basis for a large military establishment, a huge market, and a labour force that has the potential to change the entire region's demographics. In the future, India is likely to become one of the world's largest economies and a trading and investment hub for the region. Economic globalisation will only further accentuate India's dominant position.

During the colonial era, Britain exploited India's size and regional centrality to create what has been called a “subordinate” empire in the Indian Ocean. India was an administrative hub and provided the soldiers, workers, and merchants necessary for Britain's rule over almost the entire Indian Ocean region. After Independence in 1947, India saw itself in a leadership role in the Indian Ocean, but was severely constrained by its lack of economic and military power. With the growth of its national power in recent years, India now has the opportunity to again extend its influence in the Indian Ocean.

Since the end of the Cold War India's economic growth has

dramatically accelerated, from 0.8% per annum in 1991-92 to around 7.2% per annum in 2011. India's GDP has grown from \$267 billion in 1991 to an estimated \$1,676 billion in 2011.ⁱ [1] In 2007, Goldman Sachs predicted that India's GDP (in U.S. dollar terms) will exceed the U.S.'s by 2050. [2] Although India's trading links with its South Asian neighbours and with much of the broader Indian Ocean region are relatively weak, these are expected to grow significantly in coming years.

India's growing economic power is also being translated into expanded military capabilities, particularly its ability to project military power. Defence expenditure has increased considerably over the last two decades, from Rs. 196 billion (\$17.6 billion) in 1991 to Rs. 2,634 billion (\$46.1 billion) in 2012, making it the eighth largest defence spender in the world behind Saudi Arabia.ⁱⁱ [3]

India's defence budget for 2012-13 increased by 18% over the previous year although it increased by only 5.3% for 2013-14. Most of the increase in India's defence expenditure has been devoted to modernising the army and air force, and to transforming the Indian Navy (IN) into a blue water navy that can project power throughout the Indian Ocean. The navy's share of total defence expenditure has risen significantly in recent years, from 11% in 1992-93 to around 18% in 2013-14. [4]

India's economic growth and the growth of its military capabilities are also changing India's strategic perspectives, including a confidence to assume greater security responsibilities throughout the Indian Ocean region. As Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh recently commented, India has "...sought to assume our responsibility for stability in the Indian Ocean Region. We are well positioned, therefore, to become a net provider of security in our immediate region and beyond." [5]

For some, the notion that India should assume security responsibilities beyond South Asia might seem new. While India has long exercised the role of the main security provider within South Asia and has seen itself as exercising an undefined "leadership role"

ⁱIn exchange rate terms; dollars throughout this paper refer to US dollars.

ⁱⁱExcluding expenditure on nuclear weapons. The 1991 figure is expressed in 2011 constant US dollars and the 2012 figure is expressed in 2012 dollars.

in the broader region, it has historically been cautious about taking on security responsibilities beyond the subcontinent. To a large extent, this reflected India's preoccupation with immediate security threats on its borders and the rhetoric of non-alignment.

Nevertheless, India has in fact acted as a security provider to the region on several occasions, including using what some might traditionally call "gunboat diplomacy" to avert threatened coups against the governments of the Indian Ocean island states of Mauritius (1983), the Seychelles (1987) and the Maldives (1988). [6, 7] Thus India has in the past acted as a security provider in the broader region where the occasion was deemed warranted and its capabilities allowed for it.

India's role as a regional security provider is likely to grow as its economic and political interests in the Indian Ocean expand. India is increasingly likely to see that it is in its own interests to ensure regional stability, including containing and/or ameliorating security problems emanating from the many failed or fragile states in the region (for example, Somalia, Yemen, several Indian Ocean island states, and Myanmar). The Indian Navy is already frequently deployed to provide security throughout much of the western Indian Ocean.

It is likely that in future years India will take a more active stabilisation role in the region, perhaps in some ways similar to how Australia acts as a security provider to small island states in the South Pacific. As India takes a greater leadership role, there may also be a growing expectation among many states (both inside and outside the Indian Ocean region) that India will shoulder more of the cost of providing the so-called "public goods" of security when required to do so.

Many in the region are watching the growth of India's power and influence. Although India's dispute with Pakistan still taints India's relationships with some Muslim-majority states, many states in the region see India in largely benign terms and welcome its rise as a regional security provider. India is probably already the most militarily powerful state located in the Indian Ocean and is likely to become relatively even more powerful in the future.

But even as its power grows, India may need to exercise strategic

leadership within the region in a way that is very different from other powers. The U.S. is likely to remain the strongest military power in the region for decades to come, and the strategic interest in the region of China and other East Asian powers is also growing.

Importantly, the Indian Ocean region also includes several middle powers that have large military establishments which now or in the future may exercise considerable military, economic, and political power in their own sub-regions and further afield. These include Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and South Africa. Some of these states have many interests in common with India. Others are potential competitors and one, Pakistan, has a long-standing relationship of enmity.

This relative multi-polarity (if one puts aside U.S. predominance) means that India's greatest strategic challenge in the Indian Ocean in the coming years may not be the development of power projection capabilities such as aircraft carriers – although this may be an important precondition to regional leadership – but the quality of the strategic relationships that it can build in the region. Over the last few decades, Indian strategists have paid a considerable amount of attention to the former, but relatively less attention to the latter.

Bringing together key states in the region will not be an easy task. The states in and around the Indian Ocean are highly diverse in almost every measure: social and economic development, geography, and religion. They range from among the world's smallest to the largest countries, from the richest and most stable nations to fragile or failed states. Nor is there much history of regional cooperation. In the modern era, interaction among states across the Indian Ocean has been limited – the ocean has represented a highway used by others, but not usually a unifying factor for its residents.

But the rise of India as a central power in the Indian Ocean may change this. Already, India is the most important relationship for some of the smaller countries, and it represents an increasingly important relationship for the middle powers. As India rises, Indian Ocean states will also increasingly interact with each other through India.

1.2 The shape of India's power in the Indian Ocean region

How India might exercise a leading role in the Indian Ocean is, as yet, uncertain. India's strategy about the Indian Ocean is evolving. Indian strategic thinking about the Indian Ocean is derived from a variety of sources and ideas, which include imperial perspectives inherited from the British, Nehruvian-style ideas of non-alignment and strategic autonomy, and a not-insignificant slice of nominative determinism – it is called the “Indian Ocean” after all.

This sometimes results in a lack of coherence about India's desired role in the region, but it is nevertheless possible to identify some consistent themes in Indian thinking. These include a widespread belief in India's destiny to become the leading power in the Indian Ocean; an instinct to exclude extra-regional powers from the region; and a desire to create a benign sphere of influence.

Certainly, a belief in India's future leading role in the Indian Ocean seems to be widespread among its people. According to an October 2012 opinion poll conducted by Australia's Lowy Institute, some 94% of Indian respondents believed that India should have the most powerful navy in the Indian Ocean, and 89% believed that India should do more to lead regional cooperation among Indian Ocean countries. [8]

At the same time, many Indians also see India as a moral and benign international leader without territorial ambitions or claims to hegemony. George Tanham, an American observer of Indian strategic culture, has described India's self-perceived regional role as a “friendly policeman” that seeks peace and stability for the entire Indian Ocean region. [9] Similarly, during the Cold War, India's self-perceived international role was as a moral and impartial leader of the Third World, trying to secure peace and stability for developing states against the inimical intrusions of neo-imperialists.

Many in the Indian elite believe that India will achieve a dominant strategic role in the Indian Ocean by demonstrating benign and principled leadership as what New Delhi is now calling the region's “main resident power.” The tasks of the main resident power may include organising friendly states, providing public

security goods, and helping to resist the “intrusion” of outside powers into the region.

But the dominant worldview of the Indian elite also emphasises a hierarchy in international affairs and India's position in that hierarchy. They believe that India will become one of the leading states in the world and that it is important to be recognised as such. A gap between India's current capabilities and ambitions has led some to describe India as a “status inconsistent” power – that is, there is a discrepancy between its perceptions of its own achievements and entitlements and its ascribed status at an international level. [10]

India currently possesses only some great power capabilities (for example, nuclear weapons, a large population, and a large military establishment), and has the potential to possess others (including economic strength and military power projection capabilities). But many in New Delhi believe that India is unfairly denied recognition of its proper international status. In other words, many perceive an entitlement to status based on India's potential rather than actual capabilities.

As Selig Harrison, a U.S. expert on South Asia, puts it, “Many Indians have what might be called a ‘post-dated self image’. They are confident that India is on the way to great power status and want others to treat them as if they had, in fact, already arrived.” [11]

To outsiders, India does sometimes appear to be preoccupied with the recognition by others of its status as a great power and its accompanying prerogatives. A preoccupation with status, for example, encourages the acquisition of major power status symbols such as aircraft carriers and nuclear submarines, whether or not such capabilities can be convincingly shown to represent a strategic priority.

Considerations of international hierarchy might also underlie India's willingness to engage with small or weaker states in the region, where it clearly dominates the relationship, and its caution in engaging with middle powers, which may be less willing to acknowledge India's special status. Considerations of symbolism and status are also significant factors in India's regional relationships. India's concerns about status, for example, underlie India's irritation at Australia

over its refusal for many years to supply uranium to India (even though India had no pressing need for supplies of the commodity) and its demands that Canberra agree in principle to supply uranium to India before the strategic relationship can develop further.

1.3 India's potential partners in the Indian Ocean

As noted above, India is now in the process of building military capabilities that could make it the largest military power among the littoral states of the Indian Ocean. However, this will not make India the dominant power in the Indian Ocean. Despite the growth in India's military capabilities, the U.S. is likely to remain the predominant military power in the Indian Ocean region for some decades to come.

The U.S. has been the predominant military power in the Indian Ocean since the early 1970s, with the principal strategic objectives of securing access to Middle Eastern oil and energy transportation routes. In pursuing these objectives, the U.S. has relied as much as possible on formal and informal alliances with local states, backed by substantial U.S. naval and air forces stationed within the region. These forces are mostly concentrated in and around the Persian Gulf, where the U.S. military command (USCENTCOM) oversees considerable forces, including the U.S. Navy's Fifth Fleet based at Bahrain.

The U.S. maintains a significant defence presence throughout the Indian Ocean, including operating, or having access to, military infrastructure in the Persian Gulf (including in Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Oman, and Djibouti); South Asia (in Pakistan and Afghanistan); Indian Ocean islands (Diego Garcia and Seychelles); Southeast Asia (including Thailand and Singapore); and Australia. The U.S. base at Diego Garcia has a crucial role in the U.S. military strategy in the Indian Ocean and the world.

Over the last decade or so, the U.S. has encouraged the expansion of India's naval ambitions and capabilities throughout the Indian Ocean region. India is largely seen by Washington as a status quo power and a net security provider, in contrast to China and Pakistan, which are treated as sources of instability. In its

pronouncements the U.S. has gone out of its way to avoid any suggestion of an alliance with India, but Washington is generally optimistic that India will work in cooperation with the U.S. in providing security to the region. Washington believes that India's strategic interests are broadly aligned with the U.S.' and that India will play an important role in sharing the burden of maritime security needs in the Indian Ocean.

This stance bodes well for India's growing security role. The U.S. appears willing, if so desired by New Delhi, to assist in facilitating the growth of India's military capabilities and security relationships throughout the region; at the very least, it seems unlikely that the U.S. will stand in India's way.

Although India now focuses more on developing its regional security relationships than it did a decade or two ago, the depth of these relationships still lags well behind India's relative "hard power" military capabilities. This is partly due to ideological constraints. One constraint is a widespread instinct among Indian policy-makers against security cooperation with other states. This springs from several sources: many in the Indian elite have a continuing post-colonial defensiveness and the fear that other states will try to dominate India; there is a continuing Nehruvian-style commitment to state sovereignty as an absolute and a dislike of any arrangements with other states that may impinge on that sovereignty; and there is also a nationalistic view that a strong India has no need to rely on others for its security.

During the Cold War, these views were manifested in the creed of non-alignment, which forbade India from entering into formal military alliances. Similar ideas lie behind the current devotion to strategic autonomy among India's elite and fears that cooperation with the U.S. – and even with lesser powers such as Australia – may in some way undermine India's destiny of becoming a great power. Put together, these ideas create considerable suspicions of security cooperation, which are much more apparent than in other countries.

Such views are probably more evident among India's political elite than in the military: the Indian Navy, in particular, has much stronger instincts towards cooperation, which probably reflects an organisational culture and worldview that is inherited from the

Royal Navy. Although the taboo against security cooperation might be expected to lessen somewhat over time, for the foreseeable future there will be a strong preference for security cooperation only in politically non-controversial areas or in a manner that is not overly publicly visible.

India is of course not alone in its instincts against security cooperation with other states. Before the U.S. became a global power it also tried to avoid what it called “foreign entanglements.” The U.S. followed this policy for more than a century and only abandoned it in the 1940s when fears of German and/or Soviet domination of Europe forced it to take an active and sustained role in managing the international order.

But while the U.S. had the ability to dominate its own hemisphere in the 19th and 20th centuries without the need for local alliances, that option is unlikely to be available to India in the Indian Ocean region. India may be the largest local power in the Indian Ocean, but even excluding the overwhelming power of the U.S., there are other regional powers that India will need to co-opt if it is to take a leading role.

The provision of security on a unilateral basis is becoming untenable even for the U.S., and India will be increasingly expected by others to demonstrate regional leadership in a cooperative manner. Arguably, an ideological insistence on strategic autonomy, whether or not it helped India during the Cold War, may now act as a significant constraint on India’s influence in the Indian Ocean.

Despite these constraints, India’s security relationships with many states in the Indian Ocean region have improved significantly since the end of the Cold War, particularly with smaller states. India has long-standing close ties with Mauritius and has developed close security relationships with Singapore and Maldives. It is also pushing to develop security engagements with other Indian Ocean states such as the Seychelles, Oman, and Mozambique.

But India has been slower to develop closer security relationships with the middle powers of the Indian Ocean region, including with Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and South Africa. All these states exercise considerable military power within their own sub-regions and have significant political

and/or economic influence throughout the Indian Ocean region and beyond. As argued above, it will be difficult for India to project sustained military power beyond South Asia and into the Indian Ocean region without assistance from, or cooperation with, one or more of these middle powers.

The relative capabilities to project military power among major Indian Ocean states can be broadly gauged from their relative levels of military and naval spending, as outlined in Table 1 on page 24.

There are some important differences in the power projection capabilities underlying these figures. For example, although Saudi Arabia's naval expenditure (\$3.49 billion) is relatively high, and its aggregate military expenditure is the largest in the region, its navy and other armed forces are not designed to project power in a sustained manner beyond its immediate environs.

Other states, such as Indonesia, may have a large number of naval vessels, but the level of their quality and maintenance means that in practice they operate as a coastal force. Of all Indian Ocean states, only the militaries of India and Australia have been established to project significant naval and air power beyond their immediate surrounds on any reasonably sustained basis.

As noted above, India has been relatively slow and cautious in its security engagement with the middle powers of the Indian Ocean region. In some cases, this may be a function of its general lack of strategic direction or highly cautious approach to security cooperation. In other cases, there have been constraints on security relations. Relations with Indonesia, Malaysia, and Saudi Arabia, for example, are to a greater or lesser extent constrained by the Islamic factor and other considerations such as political irritations over the position of the ethnic Tamil community in Malaysia.

Several middle powers, including Australia, Indonesia, and South Africa, see considerable benefits in developing strategic partnerships with India. They regard India as a potentially important regional maritime security provider for the broader Indian Ocean region. This includes maritime policing in relation to so-called "small s" maritime security concerns such as piracy, illegal fishing, smuggling, and people trafficking, but also acting as a regional stabiliser for the many failed, failing or fragile states

Table1: Estimated military and naval spending of major Indian Ocean powers (ranked by naval spending) ⁱⁱⁱ

Country	Aggregate military spending 2012 (US\$) ^{iv} [12]	Including aggregate naval spending 2012 (US\$) [13]	Including procurement spending 2012 (US\$) [14]	2012 GDP (US\$) [15]
U.S.	\$682 billion	\$180 billion [16] ^v	\$47.8 billion [17] ^{vi}	\$15,680 billion
Australia	\$26.1 billion	\$8.10 billion [18] ^{vii}	\$1.38 billion	\$1,542 billion
Iran	\$9.8 billion ^{viii}	\$6.82 billion	\$1.36 billion	\$548 billion
India	\$46.1 billion	\$6.76 billion [19] ^{ix}	\$3.35 billion [20] ^x	\$1,825 billion
Saudi Arabia	\$56.7 billion	\$3.49 billion	\$0.21 billion	\$727 billion
Singapore	\$9.7 billion	\$2.62 billion	\$0.31 billion	\$276 billion
Indonesia	\$6.8 billion	\$1.21 billion	\$0.26 billion	\$878 billion
Pakistan	\$6.7 billion	\$1.09 billion [21] ^{xi}	\$0.43 billion	\$231 billion
Malaysia	\$4.6 billion	\$0.98 billion	\$0.26 billion	\$303 billion
South Africa	\$4.4 billion	\$0.37 billion [22] ^{xii}	\$0.02 billion	\$384 billion

Source: Formulated by the author

ⁱⁱⁱFigures for military expenditure are external estimates and are listed here only for comparison.

^{iv} 2012 current dollars.

^v U.S. government figure: US \$161 billion (includes US Marine Corps).

^{vi} U.S. government figure: US \$45.8 billion (includes US Marine Corps).

^{vii} Australian government figure: A\$4.2 billion (US \$4.2 billion converted at applicable exchange rates as of 30 June 2012). Does not include expenditure on maritime air surveillance.

^{viii} 2009 figures, possibly understated.

^{ix} Indian government figure: Rs. 37,314.44 crores (US \$6.86 billion, FY2012-13 budget estimate, using an exchange rate of US\$=Rs 54.35 as at 31 March 2013).

^x Indian government figure: Rs. 24,766.42 crores (US \$4.55 billion, FY2012-13 budget estimate, using an exchange rate of US\$=Rs 54.35 as at 31 March 2013).

^{xi} Pakistan government figure: US \$562 million for FY2012

^{xii} South African government figure: Rs. 2,539,002 (US \$400 million, converted at applicable exchange rates as at 31 December 2012) for FY2012-13.

in the region (including, for example, Somalia, Yemen, and several island states).

India has also demonstrated its ability to act as a maritime security provider to maritime South Asia, particularly in relation to Sri Lanka and the Maldives. It is widely expected that as India's economic and military power grows, it will assume a greater burden in providing regional security than it has in the past, including, for example, in Southeast Asia, East Africa, or among the many small and weak island states in the Indian Ocean. However, while some middle powers may be willing to cede a regional leadership role to India under certain conditions, they will also expect India to give proper recognition to the interests of littoral states.

Section Two

Australia's strategic perspectives on the Indian Ocean and India

2.1 Australia's security arrangements

Although Australia is a major Indian Ocean state, it is only now beginning to really find its strategic voice in the region. More than 14,000 kilometres of Australia's coastline is on the Indian Ocean – the longest coastline of any littoral state. Australia also has by far the largest area of maritime jurisdiction in the Indian Ocean, including an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) aggregating 3.88 million square kilometres and an extended continental shelf of some 2 million square kilometres.

It has the second largest economy of any Indian Ocean state, with a GDP of \$1,542 billion in 2012,^{xiii} and it is one of the wealthiest on a per capita basis. [23] Australia is also a major trading nation, relying on the Indian Ocean for the transport of most of its exports and a large proportion of its imports.

Over the last two decades, in particular, Australia has experienced a considerable demographic and economic shift towards its west coast. Some of the world's largest iron ore reserves are located in Western Australia. Oil and gas reserves are also being developed both onshore and off Western Australia, with the result that Australia is likely to become the largest liquefied natural gas (LNG) exporter in the world within the next decade. [24]

These developments have enhanced the strategic importance of the western side of the Australian continent and Australia's interests in the security of the Indian Ocean as a whole. But for much of its history, in strategic terms, Australia has looked north and east,

^{xiii} Per capita numbers in purchasing power parity.

towards the Pacific and not the Indian Ocean. There are good reasons for this. Most of Australia's population and industry lie on the Pacific Ocean, and its economic relationships are dominated by East Asia and the Pacific. Since gaining independence, Australia has also perceived security threats as primarily emanating from its north and not its west.

Canberra has long had the luxury of relying on great and powerful friends as its security guarantors: first through its imperial links with Britain, and since 1951 with the U.S. under the Australia-New Zealand-United States Security Treaty (or the ANZUS alliance). These alliances have permitted Australia to largely rely on the Royal Navy and then the U.S. Navy to secure its sea lines of communication to West Asia and Europe. This has allowed Australia to pay relatively little attention to maritime security in the Indian Ocean.

Nevertheless, Australia has long been an active contributor to the security of the broader Indian Ocean region in conjunction with its allies. Since the beginning of the 20th century, Australia has sent numerous expeditionary forces to Africa, West Asia, and Southeast Asia alongside British forces or as part of U.S.-sponsored coalitions.

As of May 2012, Australian Defence Force personnel were deployed in nine operations in the Indian Ocean region, including sizeable deployments in Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iraq, South Sudan, and East Timor. [25] Despite these numerous deployments, until recently Australia has historically made little effort to develop close security relationships in the Indian Ocean region beyond its longstanding security partners in Southeast Asia (including Singapore and Malaysia).

Australia's security arrangements with the U.S. have generally worked to its satisfaction, enhancing its strategic influence and acting as a major "force multiplier" of its defence assets. Among other things, it also helped to ensure that a friendly power retained predominance in the Indian Ocean region. Australia has had no desire to sponsor the establishment of a regional security order in the Indian Ocean, dominated by regional states, as this could threaten the predominance of the U.S. in the region; indeed, for decades it has worked assiduously to draw the U.S. further into the Indian Ocean region and keep it there.

2.2 The growing importance of the Indian Ocean region for Australia

The Indian Ocean is now assuming greater importance in Australian defence planning. Over the last several decades, Australia has gradually rebalanced its defence resources from its population centres in the southeast, towards the Indian Ocean and the north. This began during the 1980s with a greater emphasis on continental defence and self-reliance, and a move away from Australia's longstanding policy of "forward defence" in East Asia. This strategy prompted the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) to move around half its fleet to the Indian Ocean and new air bases were developed in western and central Australia. These moves were intended to facilitate the deployment of air and naval resources to the west and north in the event of conflict, to defend the so-called "air-sea gap" between Australia and Southeast Asia.

In 2011, a Force Posture Review recommended the further development of naval and air force infrastructure in northwest Australia, as well as the upgrading of a small airfield on Australia's Cocos Island (located some 1,300 kilometres southwest of Jakarta) for use by maritime surveillance aircraft. [26]

Australia is the second largest maritime power among Indian Ocean states, after India. In 2012, its total military budget was some \$26.1 billion. [27] Its naval spending has been estimated at around \$8.1 billion (which is considerably more than India's naval spending). [28] Although its military establishment is relatively small in terms of personnel, Australia has long maintained a qualitative edge in its region, mostly based on first-rate U.S. defence technology.

Australia recently announced plans for a major military modernisation that will allow it to maintain this technological edge for at least another 30 years. This will include the acquisition by the RAN of two large (27,000 tonne) Amphibious Assault Ships for extended amphibious operations and three new Air Warfare Destroyers, as well as plans to build 12 large conventional submarines capable of extended deployments throughout the Indian Ocean region. [29] The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) has acquired or will acquire up to 72 fifth generation F-35 fighters in addition to 36 Super Hornet fighters, six C-17 Globemaster

heavy lift aircraft, eight P-8 maritime surveillance aircraft and five KC-30 tankers. [30]

Together, these will considerably enhance Australia's power projection capabilities throughout the Indian Ocean region, particularly when operated in conjunction with basing facilities and other defence assets available through the U.S. and Australia's defence partners in Southeast Asia.

2.3 Australia's defence relationships in the Indian Ocean

In recent years, in response to the changing strategic environment, including the rise of China as a major military power, Australia has also moved closer to the U.S. as an alliance partner in both the Pacific and Indian Oceans. It is now in the process of operationalising the alliance beyond what was considered necessary during the Cold War. In conjunction with the so-called U.S. "rebalance" towards Asia, in 2011 the Australian government announced the rotational deployment of up to 2,500 U.S. Marines to Darwin for parts of the year to train with the Australian Defence Force.

The U.S. will also be granted greater access to Australian air bases and will pre-position fuel, ammunition, and equipment in northern Australia; Fremantle is likely to be increasingly used by the U.S. Navy. There has been speculation that a U.S. carrier group could be home-ported in Fremantle, although that would require major investments. [31] But while the U.S. is moving more defence resources to Australia and its vicinity, Washington has also made it clear that it expects Australia to take greater security responsibilities in the Indian Ocean, including in partnership with India.

Australia's defence relationships in the Indian Ocean region have been historically focussed on Southeast Asia. Australia has long had strong security relationships with Southeast Asian states such as Malaysia and Singapore (which, together with New Zealand and Britain, are partners in the 1971 Five Power Defence Arrangement) and is rapidly building a closer relationship with others, such as Indonesia.

However, as will be discussed further in Section Three of this

paper, Australia's relationship with India has long been relatively distant – in fact, the two have largely operated in separate strategic spheres. But this view is changing rapidly. Australia's 2009 Defence White Paper flagged the "strong mutual interest" of Australia and India in enhancing maritime security cooperation in the Indian Ocean. The paper commented that "As India extends its reach and influence into areas of shared strategic interest, we will need to strengthen our defence relationship and our understanding of Indian strategic thinking..." [32]

Australia perceives India as essentially a status quo power and as a net security provider in its immediate region. As India's economic influence and military capabilities increase, there is significant potential for India to indeed act as a net security provider in the broader region. It is Canberra's preference that India should assume such a role in cooperation with Australia and other key states in the region.

But Australia is still coming to grips with the idea of the Indian Ocean as a region in strategic terms. Although Canberra has unified policy frameworks for the Pacific Ocean, the Antarctic, and the Southern Ocean, such an approach seems to be lacking for the Indian Ocean as a whole. [33]

2.4 Changes in Australia's strategic perspectives

In its 2013 Defence White Paper, Australia has now officially opted to conceptually expand its principal strategic focus from the "Asia Pacific" (in strategic terms, essentially East Asia and the Western Pacific) into a broader construct to be called the "Indo-Pacific" (which is defined as the arc extending from India through Southeast Asia to Northeast Asia). The White Paper noted this major conceptual change in Australia's strategic perspectives, what it called, "the emergence of the Indo-Pacific as a single strategic arc" with which Australia must concern itself, with Southeast Asia at its centre. [34]

While this is a significant conceptual change in Australia's strategic perspectives, its practical implications are not yet clear. For the present, at least, Australia's grand strategy in the Indian Ocean is likely to include encouraging the continuation of U.S.

predominance for as long as possible, while developing a secondary partnership with India. Although Australia may be tempted to translate its grand strategy in the Asia Pacific – regional engagement within the umbrella of an established U.S. regional alliance system – into the Indian Ocean, it is questionable whether this approach will work. [35]

The recent Defence White Paper recognises this difference while commenting that Australia “will engage closely with other countries with interests in the region to ensure that the Indian Ocean dynamics are supported by the evolution, over time, of a more robust regional security architecture that provides mechanisms for the exchange of perspectives and the management of the region’s security challenges.” [36]

In practice, this is likely to mean working more closely with India and other major states such as Indonesia to jointly take greater responsibility for regional security management.

Section Three

An overview of the India-Australia strategic relationship

3.1 Developments in the strategic relationship

There may now be good reasons for Australia and India to develop a good security partnership. But for most of their history as independent states their political and strategic relationship has not been close. Since 1947, bilateral relations have often been characterised by long periods of indifference interspersed with occasional political irritation. [37] Although the two countries share a language, a colonial heritage, Westminster political institutions, and a democratic tradition, in practice these links have rarely brought them together in strategic terms, at least until recent years.

During the 20th century, Australia identified closely with Britain and then the U.S. as essentially benign international forces. India saw the U.S. presence in the Indian Ocean region as neo-imperialism. During the Cold War, Australia did not figure materially in New Delhi's security calculations; rather, it was often considered as being merely a U.S. stooge and a site of U.S. military facilities. [38] In contrast, Canberra frequently considered India as difficult to deal with, anti-American, and too close to the Soviets.

The relationship slowly improved only after the end of the Cold War. But India's Pokhran II nuclear tests in 1998 damaged relations. Australia, largely following its convictions about the sanctity of nuclear non-proliferation norms, condemned the nuclear tests in strong terms. In turn, New Delhi took offence at this reaction, seeing Australia as hypocritical in condemning India's desire to provide for its own security while sheltering under the nuclear umbrella of U.S. extended deterrence. India might also have resented that a middle power such as Australia would object to what many saw as India's entry onto the international stage as a world power.

While some in Canberra believe that Australia was unfairly singled out by India over this issue, there is little doubt that Australia (along with Japan) placed itself at the forefront of international opposition to India's actions. The affair demonstrated a particular indifference by Australia at that time to India's security perspectives and to the bilateral relationship.

But Canberra quickly realised that India's new nuclear status was not, in fact, reversible, and that it had got somewhat ahead of the U.S. and the Europeans on the nuclear issue. Since 1998, Canberra has taken much of the initiative in trying to improve the bilateral political, economic, and security relationship.

Australia's views of India's role in the region have developed independently of those of the U.S., although it is driven by similar factors, including the view that India is essentially a status quo power and a potentially important net security provider to the region.

An expanded strategic relationship with India now has strong bipartisan political support in Canberra. The decision of the Australian Labour Party in December 2011 to remove a prohibition on the export of uranium to India was an important signal of the extent to which Australia was prepared to move past long-standing and deeply-felt beliefs purely to improve the relationship. But it is not yet clear to what extent Canberra will be prepared to back this view with money and a sustained commitment to the relationship.

In contrast, India has generally been slower to see the benefits of a greater security engagement with Australia, or to act upon it. To some extent, India's engagement with Australia should be seen in the context of closer relations between India and several of its Asia Pacific neighbours, including countries such as Japan and Singapore. But many Australian interlocutors have perceived a particular degree of caution from their Indian counterparts in developing the relationship. Some of the reasons for this will be discussed in greater detail below.

Over the last decade, the engagement between the two countries in the security dimension has gained momentum. Several bilateral agreements on security-related matters have been signed, including a 2003 agreement on terrorism, a 2006 memorandum of

understanding on defence cooperation, a 2007 defence information sharing arrangement, and agreements on intelligence dialogue, extradition, and terrorism in 2008.

In November 2009, Australia and India announced a Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation, intended to set out shared strategic perspectives and create a framework for the further development of bilateral security cooperation. At that time, during a visit to New Delhi, Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd told an audience that India and Australia were “natural partners” and should become “strategic partners.” [39]

The Security Declaration is a non-binding declaration of principles and understandings, which establishes a bilateral framework for further cooperation in security matters. [40] The Declaration was a notable step in establishing a framework to further develop the security relationship, including the formalisation of regular consultations and dialogues between foreign ministers, senior military and diplomatic representatives, and joint working groups on maritime security operations and counter-terrorism and immigration.

These formal agreements have underpinned greater engagement on security-related matters over the last five to ten years. Bilateral defence and security dialogues currently include:

- Meetings of Australian and Indian Foreign Ministers: Held annually since 2001 pursuant to the India-Australia Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue (FMFD).
- Meetings of Defence Ministers: These have been held at relatively regular intervals, but not annually. The meetings have mostly been held in India, but in June 2013 Indian Defence Minister A. K. Antony visited Australia for the first time.
- Annual Defence Policy Talks (since 2010): These talks are held at the level of the Additional Secretary (India) and Defence Secretary – Strategy (Australia).
- Regular visits of Service Chiefs: Australian and Indian Service Chiefs meet their counterparts around once a year. According to one observer, these visits and the generally good personal relationships at this level have maintained the relationship

despite the thinness of interaction at other levels.

- Australia-India Maritime Security Operations Working Group (established in 2006).
- Regular staff talks between senior officers of the navies (held annually), air forces (which was supposed to be annual, but recently moved to a biennial basis) and armies (held biennially).
- A 1.5 Track Strategic Roundtable (held since 2001) and a 1.5 Track Defence Strategic Dialogue (held since 2012), hosted by Australian and Indian think tanks.

As will be discussed in Section Four, further potential areas of bilateral cooperation have also been considered.

But these developments should also be viewed against the missed opportunities and challenges of the last decade. In the security dimension, one important missed opportunity for a broader security engagement between India and Australia was the so-called “Quadrilateral” initiative in 2007. This involved a proposal by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe for a formal security dialogue among Japan, the U.S., India, and Australia.

But the initiative sparked a strongly negative reaction from Beijing, which claimed it marked “the formation of a small NATO to resist China.” [41] Although each of the putative partners (including Japan) became increasingly hesitant about the initiative, it was Australia, under the newly-elected Prime Minister Rudd, that first publicly backed away from the proposal. Canberra was concerned about China’s reaction to the proposal. It was also concerned that the arrangement would effectively replace the Trilateral Security Dialogue among the U.S., Japan, and Australia, which Australia regarded as a key forum for coordination among the Pacific allies (particularly with Japan).

The announcement of Australia’s withdrawal from the initiative, made in early 2008 by the Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith in the presence of the Chinese Foreign Minister, was certainly clumsy. It was seen by some in New Delhi as a case of kow-towing to Beijing. This episode increased India’s apprehensions about Australia’s close economic relationship with China.

For several years, nuclear issues were also a considerable irritant,

slowing the development of the relationship. Although Australia supported the approval of the U.S.-India nuclear deal by the Nuclear Supplier's Group in August 2008, it continued to refuse to supply uranium to India for several years because it was outside the international non-proliferation system. It was feared that making a special exception for India, which is not a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, might seriously undermine international non-proliferation norms.

While India did not need Australian uranium, having secured supplies elsewhere, New Delhi saw this prohibition as indicating a lack of commitment to the relationship and a refusal to acknowledge India's great power status. However, a change in Australia's uranium policy in 2011, and the ongoing negotiation of uranium supply arrangements, has largely removed this impediment to the relationship.

The economic relationship is another growing, and mostly positive, factor in the bilateral relationship. The relationship is mutually beneficial – Australia is seeking to expand its export markets and balance its economic relationship with China, while India is seeking a stable resource and energy supplier. A greater degree of economic interdependence could have a positive effect on the security relationship.

A relatively weak economic exchange contributed to a lack of political alignment for 60 years, but now India is becoming one of Australia's largest customers for resources and energy. India is now Australia's fourth largest export customer after China, Japan, and South Korea, although the balance of trade is heavily in favour of Australia. Major Australian exports to India include coal, gold, copper, and education services. While energy exports of uranium and gas are currently relatively small, there is substantial potential for growth.

Bilateral investment remains relatively low. Indian companies are beginning to make major investments in Australian resources, but Australian companies are largely locked out of the Indian mining sector. Although an Australia-India Free Trade Agreement has been proposed, negotiations have not yet commenced. An agreement is unlikely to be finalised quickly.

People-to-people ties between Australia and India have historically been quite weak, not helped by the fact that the Indian community in Australia has long been small compared with other immigrant communities. But this is changing, and in 2011-12 India became the largest single source of immigration to Australia. Australia will no doubt feel the growing political and economic influence of the Indian community in coming years.

Public opinion is also becoming an increasingly important factor in the relationship. In 2009, muggings of several Indian students in Melbourne led to hostile reports in the Indian media, which caused decision-makers in Delhi to slow down further developments in relations.

Despite these controversies, the Indian public now appears to see Australia in favourable terms and as an important potential partner for India. According to the Australian Lowy Institute's 2013 poll of Indian public opinion on foreign policy issues, [42] when Indian respondents were asked to rate the warmth of their feelings to various countries on a 1-100 scale, Australia was rated fourth at 56, ranking behind only the U.S. (62), Singapore (58) and Japan (57), but well ahead of other Asian or African states. When Indians were asked what countries India should be more like, Australia was rated second (at 60% of respondents) only after the U.S. (78%). A slightly lower level of respondents (56%) thought that Australia would be a good partner for India in the Indian Ocean.

Australian public opinion seems to place India around the middle of the field, possibly reflecting the relative lack of interaction. According to the Australian Lowy Institute's 2013 poll of Australian public opinion on foreign policy issues, [43] when Australian respondents were asked to rate the warmth of their feelings to various countries on a 1-100 scale, India was rated at 55, behind countries such as the UK (77), the U.S. (70) and Japan (65), and slightly ahead of China at 54 and Indonesia at 53.

While the relationship appears to have a lot of potential, concrete developments in the relationship – particularly in the security dimension – are occurring very slowly. Many observers do not consider that bilateral dialogues yet have a great deal of substance, and engagement at an operational or tactical level remains extremely thin. Some of the reasons for this are discussed in the next sub-section.

3.2 Challenges in the relationship

Any discussion of opportunities for security cooperation between India and Australia must start with an acknowledgement that the road towards a security partnership is likely to be a slow and frustrating one for its proponents. There are a number of sources of difficulty in building a security relationship between India and Australia, which reflect the differences in their historical experience, strategic perspectives and cultures. While none of these differences represents a roadblock, they could certainly inhibit the relationship.

Differences in strategic traditions: After becoming independent states in the 20th century, India and Australia developed different strategic traditions and attitudes towards security cooperation, and this remains a significant issue in their engagement. During the Cold War, India pursued a policy of non-alignment, in rhetoric if not always in practice. Many in New Delhi continue to see security alignments as inconsistent with their ideas of “independence” and view strategic autonomy as a cherished goal.

In stark contrast, Australia sees security alignments and cooperation as a virtual prerequisite for its national independence, and as an important means of enhancing its regional influence. Many in Canberra would consider a goal of strategic autonomy for Australia about as realistic or desirable as a goal of economic autonomy.

Indeed, if strategic autonomy should be seen as part of India’s “national DNA,” then strategic collaboration is part of Australia’s. As an independent state it has only ever conducted military operations as part of international coalitions, and the Australian Defence Force is largely built around an assumption of coalition operations.

In contrast, India’s instincts are against security cooperation, except under the clear banner of the United Nations. For many, security cooperation, particularly operational cooperation, carries the ideological taint that India’s strategic autonomy will be undermined.

The suspicions about security cooperation with other states tend to be more muted in the Indian Navy. Compared to other

Indian armed forces and many defence bureaucrats, the Indian Navy (IN) has a more international outlook that reflects the global perspectives it inherited from the Royal Navy and the fact that it often operates far from India's shores, frequently in cooperation with other navies. Over the last two decades, the Indian Navy has been at the forefront of pushing for cooperation with other regional navies and it takes what actions it can within the strictures imposed by the Indian Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

Nevertheless, India's post-colonial suspicions of other countries and (sometimes undefined) ideas of non-alignment still have considerable force, which makes India suspicious of foreign engagements, especially with the "West." These perspectives feed into the extreme caution of some decision-makers in New Delhi in agreeing to any security cooperation with other countries, including Australia. As one Australian diplomat observed, Indian MoD officials seem to be afraid of anything that could be remotely construed as involving an alliance – even though entering into military alliances is not part of today's international lexicon and Canberra has expressed no desire to enter into such a relationship with India.

Some also believe that India, as a rising power, should be able to "go it alone" in expanding its regional security role as part of an overall objective of achieving strategic autonomy. Why should India tie itself down in engagements with other powers? As one mid-ranking Indian naval officer commented, "Why would a growing power like India want to cooperate with a declining power like Australia?" (a view, it should be noted, that is not consistent with Australia's view of itself).

This is compounded by the view of some in New Delhi that Australia is not an "independent" strategic actor due to its relationship with the U.S. These views also highlight some of the difficulties in building a relationship between an emerging power with great power aspirations such as India and an active middle power such as Australia. As prominent Australian analysts, Anthony Bergin and Sam Bateman said: "The relationship with India must be one of equal partners. This might be hard. India seems reluctant to treat Australia on an equal basis. This will create

problems should India extend its reach and influence into areas of common strategic interest.”[44]

As has been noted previously, India can be particularly demanding that others recognise its major power status. While Australia would generally encourage an expanded regional security role for India, it will also seek to extend U.S. predominance in the Indian Ocean region for as long as possible, while also maintaining its own position as one of the major naval powers on the littoral.

Some observers have claimed that Australia might not always be as confident as the U.S. that a powerful India will necessarily be a benign presence in the Indian Ocean, [45] although such views would be in the minority in Canberra. In any event, a key objective in Australia’s engagement with India will be to help mould India’s ambitions towards strategic leadership, so that India takes an active and constructive role in the region while not disregarding the legitimate security concerns of regional states such as Australia.

Perspectives on China: Mutual concerns about the rise of China are an important factor in the Australia-India relationship, although there are differences in perceptions. Australia has growing concerns about the impact of China’s rising military power and its assertiveness in the South China Sea and elsewhere in East Asia. China is of course a major factor in India’s strategic calculations, including on their Himalayan border and in connection with its support for Pakistan. There are also concerns about its growing influence in the Indian Ocean, including claims about China’s so-called “String of Pearls” strategy to build bases or facilities for use by the Chinese Navy in the Indian Ocean. Decision-makers in New Delhi may not wholly believe these claims, but they reflect a visceral concern that China may restrict India’s freedom of action in the Indian Ocean region.

In contrast, Australian analysts tend to treat claims about China’s military plans in the Indian Ocean region with a degree of scepticism, and tend to be more understanding of China’s interests in protecting its key trading routes to West Asia and Europe. [46]

Whereas some in Delhi may see strategic benefits in India sitting astride China’s sea lanes of communication, Australia might have a greater interest in ensuring that China’s security dilemma in

the Indian Ocean is not unduly worsened. The dilemma refers to a situation where moves by one country to improve its own security are perceived as threatening to the other, prompting a spiral of response and counter-response. This could be detrimental to the stability and security of the region.

Despite these differences, there can be little doubt that the India-Australia relationship is to some extent driven by shared concerns about the rise of China. Both India and Australia want to be in a position to signal to China that they have options in terms of forming regional security partnerships if China becomes overly assertive in the Indian Ocean or Southeast Asia. As one former Indian diplomat put it: What can India and Australia do together that will send the right signals to China?

Perspectives on Pakistan: There are also differences in perspectives towards Pakistan, although these are currently being managed reasonably well. In the years after the Cold War, there was talk of other states “de-hyphenating” or “de-linking” their relationships with India and Pakistan; that is, other countries should not seek to balance their relationships with India and Pakistan through some type of quid pro quo whenever an initiative affected one of them.

In fact, over the last decade, Canberra has largely de-linked India and Pakistan in its strategic thinking. Canberra now clearly recognises that India is an important economic and security partner, and a net security provider to the region, while Pakistan is considered by many in Canberra as a significant threat to regional stability and a potential failed state.

Nevertheless, Australia’s relationship with Pakistan could still be a drag on the development of the Australia-India security relationship. Australia has had a security relationship with Pakistan dating back to the Cold War. Australia’s military presence in Afghanistan and its focus on counter-terrorism in recent years has caused the engagement to deepen, and Australia now provides assistance in training of the Pakistan Army. [47] As one Australian military official commented, in contrast to India, the Pakistani military make themselves easy to cooperate with.

It is rumoured that Pakistan may be interested in acquiring

surplus Australian defence equipment. If true, any such sales of defence equipment would be unlikely to cause a reaction in New Delhi anywhere similar to Australia's ill-considered 1990 sale of obsolescent Mirage III jet fighters to Pakistan. [48] Nevertheless, some might still see them as an unnecessary irritant in a nascent defence relationship with India. Overall, Canberra may come to the view that the ongoing drawdown of Australia's military commitment in Afghanistan provides an opportunity to downgrade its defence engagement with Pakistan.

Different perspectives on the role of defence relationships:

A key challenge in developing a security relationship between Australia and India is that they have very different perspectives on the role and importance of defence and security relationships as part of overall foreign policy. Australia sees its defence forces as playing an important foreign policy role.

As Australia's 2013 Defence White Paper states: "Australia's international defence engagement is a critical component of the Government's approach to managing the strategic transformation occurring in our region." [49] For decades Australia has made significant investments in the development of defence forces of regional partners through defence training and cooperation. [50] Reflecting its experience in Southeast Asia and elsewhere, Canberra assumes that it is desirable for security relationships with its partners to be broad-based, encompassing cooperation in many areas.

In contrast, India tends to have a narrower view of the role of its defence relationships with other countries. New Delhi does not see the Indian armed forces as being a key foreign policy actor. Since Independence, the Indian bureaucracy has kept a tight rein over the defence forces, seeing them as fulfilling only a narrow and specified role. New Delhi has long refused to appoint a single chief of defence forces; as a result, the Indian armed services operate in a relatively uncoordinated manner.

Although many senior Indian military officers see the benefit of greater contact with their foreign counterparts, they face considerable bureaucratic and political constraints in doing so. The current Indian Defence Minister closely controls direct contact between the Indian armed forces and their foreign counterparts, especially with the U.S. and its allies. Of all the armed services,

the Indian Navy has been permitted (or has carved out for itself) a relatively greater measure of freedom in dealing with foreign counterparts as part of defence diplomacy – usually on the basis that such interactions take place well out of sight of New Delhi.

But this is not just a bureaucratic issue. India's tendency to keep its defence relationships within tight parameters helps it to pursue a policy of "poly-alignment" with many different states. For example, although it has a close security relationship with Israel in the areas of defence technology and intelligence, India has kept the relationship within certain bounds to allow it to continue to have friendly relations with Iran and other countries in West Asia.

These differences in perspectives of the role of defence forces in diplomacy and foreign relations are reflected in the considerable differences in resources committed to foreign liaisons. Despite India's huge military establishment, the Defence Protocol and Foreign Liaison Division, the defence diplomacy group within the Indian MoD, is staffed with merely half a dozen officers. In contrast, Australia's main defence diplomacy group, the International Policy Division of the Australian Department of Defence (DoD), has a staff of around 50, which is in addition to the foreign liaison groups operated by the individual armed services. As a result, the Indian MoD is often overwhelmed by requests from many states wishing to interact with India, many of which are of more immediate importance to Delhi than Australia.

Decision-making processes: One of the biggest causes of frustration for those tasked with developing the security relationship is the differences in political and bureaucratic decision-making processes and style. These are so different as to sometimes make the two sides almost incomprehensible to each other.

As noted above, the Australian armed forces have quite a deal of latitude in engaging with foreign counterparts as a way of encouraging cooperation and extending Australia's strategic influence. In contrast, the Indian armed forces operate under the tight control of the civilian bureaucracy in the MoD, giving military officers little room to move in pursuing initiatives with prospective defence partners. On top of this is the additional requirement that the Indian MoD itself must also obtain clearance from the Indian MEA for its foreign liaison activities (for example, in arranging

foreign visits by senior officers), which places yet another level of bureaucratic constraints on India's activities.

The Indian defence bureaucracy also has a strong tendency towards inertia, being sprinkled with power centres that have power to veto initiatives but little authority or incentive to approve them. Indian bureaucratic decision-making in general also tends to be ad hoc, with only broad guidelines set by the political leadership, allowing the bureaucracy considerable scope to implement (or not) day to day decisions. This means that the bureaucracy retains considerable power to prevent the implementation of initiatives even when they have received in-principle approval at the political level.

Australian interlocutors report considerable frustrations in dealing with the Indian bureaucracy. The implementation of initiatives, believed to have been previously agreed upon, is frequently blocked or delayed for no discernible reason. These reports are by no means specific to Australia and are consistent with the experiences of many foreigners in dealing with New Delhi.

Australian policy-makers and officials have decades of experience of dealing with their counterparts in East Asia (including, increasingly, with China) and to some degree have become culturally acclimatised to developing security relationships in that region. But they clearly are still learning how to "work around" the Indian bureaucratic system – including how to make contact with the bureaucracy at the right level. As one Indian observer commented, one must engage at a level where a bureaucrat will have time and interest in the relevant matter. It is not a question of trying to go as high as possible in the hierarchy, because if you try to engage at too high a level, "you will get jammed."

Ontop of these bureaucratic differences, there is a basic difference in how foreign policy is formed. In general, the Indian foreign policy decision-making process is highly reactive, and New Delhi often only takes action in the face of a crisis – and there is simply no immediate security crisis that requires cooperation between India and Australia. The current government under Manmohan Singh has found it difficult to make clear foreign policy decisions even in the face of immediate provocations on India's border, such as the

killing of Indian soldiers on the Line of Control with Pakistan in January and August 2013, and the incursion of Chinese troops over the Line of Actual Control in the Himalayas in April-May 2013.

3.3 Prospects for a security partnership

Where does that leave the prospects for security cooperation between India and Australia? As noted above there are numerous shared interests and opportunities for security cooperation. But a closer relationship will require sustained political will in both Canberra and New Delhi to overcome the differences in strategic culture and perspective.

Australia has already recognised India as an important security partner in the Indian Ocean, but India is only beginning to see Australia as a useful partner. For India, in some ways, Australia represents a difficult case. India has no direct security interests in the southeast Indian Ocean and Australia's close relationship with the U.S. sometimes creates political unease in New Delhi.

On the other hand, Australia, whose naval power ranks second only to India among the littoral states, could be a useful partner for India in leveraging its reach. Apart from the potential benefits of cooperation in Southeast Asia and elsewhere, New Delhi may find that a good working relationship with Australia may ease the way for India's longer-term strategic aspirations in the Indian Ocean.

Nevertheless, moves towards greater security cooperation are more likely to be initiated by Australia, which has significantly more focus, resources, and experience in the area of defence cooperation than India. But if Australia wishes to be successful in its objectives of promoting greater cooperation with India, it will have to consider the following:

1. Australia must convince India that it can achieve its objectives in the Indian Ocean better in cooperation with Australia than by acting alone.
2. Australia will have to demonstrate that there are practical security problems that must be addressed in a cooperative manner.
3. While mutual concerns about China are an important underlying

element, China should not be elevated as the principal moving cause of the relationship. Australia will resist being drawn into India's disputes with China.

4. Australia will have to move in a consistent and sustained manner with a time horizon considerably longer than it is generally used to.

5. Australia must also move past any immediate expectations of the reciprocity that would be expected in developing security partnerships with most countries. It should be recognised that India simply does not have the institutional capability to act in a reciprocal manner, as do other countries.

In short, if Australia wishes to enhance its security and defence relationship with India, it must be prepared to act outside its comfort zone. Australia has considerable experience in defence cooperation with the U.S. and its treaty allies in Asia and Europe, as well as with partners in Southeast Asia such as Singapore and Malaysia. The cooperation has traditionally focused on providing assistance, but the emphasis is now moving towards strategic partnerships.

As a July 2013 report by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute on Australia's defence diplomacy programme commented: "As regional defence forces expand and modernise and we lose our technological advantage, engagement becomes more about strategic partnerships and less about aid and assistance. This requires a significant change in mindset." [51] In many ways, India represents a *sui generis* case in Australia's regional relationships, certainly in the degree of caution it exhibits in relation to security and defence cooperation with other countries. This could represent a considerable challenge for Australia in developing an effective model for engagement with India.

With these important caveats in mind, potential areas of security cooperation are discussed in Section 4. These may not be achieved in the near future; it is rather a list of potentially fruitful areas that can be developed over the long term.

Section Four

Opportunities for security cooperation

There is considerable scope for security cooperation between India and Australia, especially in the maritime domain. The potential areas of cooperation include:

- Security dialogues
- Cooperation in Indian Ocean regional institutions
- Cooperation in other international groupings
- People-to-people contacts
- Naval exercises and training
- Humanitarian and disaster relief/Search and rescue
- Maritime policing and piracy
- Maritime border protection and maritime domain awareness
- Cooperation between other military services
- Defence technology cooperation
- Antarctic research

4.1 Security dialogues

As has been discussed in Section Three of this paper, Australia and India have established several bilateral security dialogues or engagements over the last few years. These represent a big step forward compared with the previous level of engagement. But according to some observers, these dialogues are still frequently more form than substance. Canberra's current approach is to regularise these engagements and to avoid pushing too hard to give them substance. It is assumed that they will gain more substance

over time as a relationship of trust is developed.

India-Australia-U.S. dialogues: One priority for Australia is to expand its strategic dialogues with India to include other partners. As discussed, the so-called Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, proposed by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2007, may have provided a useful forum to encourage security cooperation between India, the U.S. Japan, and Australia. However, the manner in which Australia publicly backed away from the proposal damaged Australia's credibility in New Delhi.

Although New Delhi is, as a matter of principle, very cautious about entering into multi-party security dialogues – fearing that they could be interpreted as some sort of alliance – it does participate in a trilateral security dialogue with the U.S. and Japan at the sub-secretary level. This dialogue has proved useful in both practical and symbolic terms.

The establishment of an analogous dialogue involving India, Australia, and the U.S. would represent a significant step forward in the relationship. Although it would not be in India's or Australia's interests for their bilateral security relationship to be too bound up in the India-U.S. relationship, which is likely to wax and wane, inevitably the U.S. will be a major factor in the India-Australia partnership. For this reason it makes sense to establish a regular forum at which they can coordinate their activities.

For political reasons, it would probably be desirable for such a dialogue to be conducted at a level below that of first defence secretary. In December 2011, soon after the change in the Australian Labour Party's policy on uranium exports to India, Kevin Rudd, then Foreign Minister, proposed such a dialogue. Although he announced that he had received a positive response from India to the proposal, this was later denied by India. [52] As one former Indian diplomat commented, it seems that South Block had little reason to do any favours for the "Mandarin-speaking uranium-banning and Quadrilateral-killing" Rudd. Perhaps this view might change in relation to Australia's new conservative government.

India-Australia-Indonesia dialogues: Both Australia and India also see considerable benefit in working together to draw Indonesia into greater diplomatic and security cooperation in the

region. India, Australia, and Indonesia are the past, current, and incoming chairs of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation, while Australia and Indonesia are respectively the current and incoming chairs of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium. This creates practical opportunities for more dialogue among this “troika.” In September 2013, the first Trilateral Indian Ocean Dialogue among India-Australia-Indonesia was held in New Delhi and there are plans for further such dialogues hosted by Australia and Indonesia in 2014.

The institution of a regular strategic dialogue between India, Australia, and Indonesia represents a major acknowledgement by the three countries of their common interests in regional security and the ability of key regional states to take initiatives in this area. There is likely to be considerable scope for security cooperation among the three countries, including in relation to Humanitarian and Disaster Relief, and in information-sharing to improve Maritime Domain Awareness in the Eastern Indian Ocean.

4.2 Cooperation within Indian Ocean regional institutions

Unlike East Asia, where a veritable alphabet soup of institutions provides numerous forums for dialogue and cooperation between states, the Indian Ocean region is thin on pan-regional groupings. This reflects the great diversity of states within the region, differences in security perspectives, and the lack of any real agreement that the Indian Ocean constitutes a region at all.

Only two pan-regional groupings of any significance exist in the Indian Ocean: The rather awkwardly named Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC)^{xiv} is a forum primarily intended to encourage intra-regional trade (loosely based on the model of APEC in the Asia Pacific.) The other is the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), which is a forum for interaction between regional navies (based on the model of the Western Pacific Naval Symposium).

In the future, IOR-ARC and IONS are likely to provide

^{xiv} There are plans to change its name to the Indian Ocean Rim Association.

only limited scope for region-wide cooperation. However, both organisations could become useful loci of bilateral cooperation between India and Australia, and can potentially be a political and organisational cover for more concrete cooperation at the sub-regional level.

Indian Ocean Rim-Association for Regional Cooperation:

The IOR-ARC was established in 1997 under the joint sponsorship of India, Australia, and South Africa with the principal aim of promoting regional trade. Its form was influenced by Australia's successful experience in establishing APEC in the 1980s – to promote regional trade through “open regionalism” and voluntary trade liberalisation. But attempts to emulate APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) turned out to be a mistake, primarily due to the considerable developmental differences among Indian Ocean states and their lack of success in regional cooperation. Within a couple of years, it had become clear that the IOR-ARC's approach to trade liberalisation had failed and Australia, India, and other key members lost interest.

Over the last several years, Australia and India have both attempted to revive interest in the grouping. India currently holds the chair and Australia will take the chair in November 2013, after which Indonesia is slated to chair the grouping. .

In 2011, India and Australia worked together to bring maritime security-related issues onto the IOR-ARC's agenda for the first time by forming a working group on maritime security. India is hosting an inaugural Indian Ocean Dialogue in November 2013, which will seek to find ways for IOR-ARC member states to more effectively cooperate on maritime security issues. This will likely focus on “small s” security issues such as piracy and illegal fishing, which are major concerns for the small Indian Ocean island states.

Australia is also trying to bring Pakistan and Saudi Arabia into the IOR-ARC grouping, although India has previously not been keen on this.

The IOR-ARC can become a useful low-level forum for regional discussion, but it is unlikely that any time soon it will become a significant actor in regional security or even trade liberalisation. The diversity of its members means that there is

little or no likelihood that it could become an APEC of the Indian Ocean. In the security dimension, for the foreseeable future, IOR-ARC's role is likely to be limited to a useful talk-shop for littoral states on "soft" maritime security issues, although that in itself is a major step forward from the current position.

The IOR-ARC could, however, potentially act as an umbrella grouping to encourage the implementation of security initiatives among members on a sub-regional basis (for example, among India, Australia, and Indonesia in the eastern Indian Ocean).

Indian Ocean Naval Symposium: IONS is the only pan-Indian Ocean grouping of states that has a significant security element, and as such it is a potentially important forum for regional security cooperation between India and Australia. The grouping, which was established in 2008 under the sponsorship of the Indian Navy, revolves around a biennial meeting of navy chiefs with the objective of encouraging an exchange of perspectives on a relatively informal basis. India acted as the first chair, followed by the United Arab Emirates (2010) and South Africa (2012), with Australia due to chair in 2014. Indonesia will take the chair in 2016.

Today, IONS includes the navies of all the littoral states of the Indian Ocean (including France through its Indian Ocean territories, but not Britain). Although the U.S. and China have shown interest in joining as observers, this has been resisted by India. Except for a handful of states such as India, Australia, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, and South Africa, the great majority of navies in the Indian Ocean have severely limited capabilities and function as little more than coast guards. Nevertheless, IONS represents a potentially important forum for the exchange of perspectives on maritime security among Indian Ocean states. It also represents a potential platform through which countries like India and Australia can take small steps towards common perspectives on security issues and even on operationalising cooperation on such matters as maritime domain awareness.

Although IONS has been a useful forum for the development of personal relationships between senior naval officers, it has not, so far, achieved more concrete goals. The limited naval resources of the two last chairs, United Arab Emirates and South Africa, may have contributed to this. As the chair of IONS in 2014, Australia

will have an opportunity to breathe more life into the grouping, particularly in encouraging greater cooperation between Australia, India, and ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) states.

The National Maritime Foundation (NMF), the Indian Navy think tank, has suggested that IONS can be linked with the IOR-ARC as a way of developing the region's security architecture. According to the NMF head, Admiral Pradeep Kaushiva, this might give political structure to a security-focused grouping, just as the ASEAN Regional Forum sits underneath ASEAN. [53] This would involve developing IONS from its current status as a meeting of navy chiefs into a broader regional security structure.

It is true that such an arrangement could be useful in at least providing the Indian Ocean region with a forum focussed on security issues. However, it may be argued that IONS currently provides a useful means of developing relationships and interactions among the region's navies and should be retained for that reason. The broad membership of IONS – which includes Iran and Pakistan as members – also means that developing the grouping beyond its current function would have significant implications that are likely to cause heartburn to several member states. The suggestion is probably before its time. For these reasons, Australia is currently focused on trying to ensure that the activities of IOR-ARC and IONS are better coordinated, and that there are no major gaps in the issues dealt with by these forums.

4.3 Cooperation in other international security groupings

There may also be room for India-Australia cooperation on security issues at a global level, including on issues such as nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, and in relation to various weapons non-proliferation regimes.

These include the so-called Australia Group (some 41 states and international organisations that collaborate to prevent the abuse of dual-use technology and materials for chemical and biological weapons programmes). Other important export control regimes aimed at non-proliferation include the Nuclear Supplier Group (some 47 states that supply nuclear materials and technology),

the Missile Technology Control Regime (a grouping of 34 states to prevent the proliferation of missile technologies with a range above 400 kilometres) and the Wassenaar Arrangement (an informal arrangement among 41 participating states aimed at non-proliferation of conventional arms and dual use goods).

Australia is chair of the Australia Group and an active member of the other regimes. India is currently not a member of any of these groupings, which represents a significant anomaly in the international arms control system. Membership of these regimes requires a consensus among existing members.

In 2010, President Barack Obama signalled U.S. support for bringing India into the various export control regimes, and India welcomed this stance. Rory Medcalf of the Lowy Institute argues that Australia's role in the Australia Group, in particular, can give it some leverage to assist India in this respect. The Australia Group may be a logical place to begin India's formal entry into the global export control network, because it is not connected to any residual sensitivities about nuclear issues. Given India's massive chemical industry and the growing biotechnology sector, the absence of India from the export control regime is unsustainable. Active Australian assistance in relation to the Australia Group could also help to overcome any remaining misperceptions in New Delhi that Australia does not trust India on non-proliferation. [54] But, as one report noted, building a consensus in favour of Indian membership in any of these regimes will take time.

India's participation in such groups may also require changes in New Delhi's attitudes towards such regimes. India has long opposed the nuclear non-proliferation system, arguing that it has discriminated against India. India also opposed other export control regimes based on the argument that they were part of a western policy of denying technology to India and other developing countries.

India's ambiguous position on the Proliferation Security Initiative (a U.S.-sponsored arrangement under which participating states cooperate in the interdiction of the transport of weapons of mass destruction), [55] indicates that India now has an interest in cooperating in international non-proliferation efforts, but may not yet be fully ready to move beyond its previous stance. India's current

position, that it should be granted entry into all international export control regimes simultaneously, is likely to significantly delay any progress in this area, particularly in light of the large and varied membership of each of the groupings.

4.4 People-to-people consultations and exchanges

People-to-people networks are an extremely important factor in developing the India-Australia security relationship. The development of personal relationships and experiences of policy-makers, military officers, and civilians in the security community can provide the crucial long-term and sorely-needed glue in the bilateral relationship. People-to-people exchanges encourage a better understanding of different strategic perspectives and political and bureaucratic processes, which are important drivers in what India does (or more frequently does not do) in its security relations.

Such experiences and familiarity almost always have positive effects, but it can also potentially work in the other direction. Some senior Indian military officers still cite the events of 1998 as a reason why Australia may not be seen as a trustworthy strategic partner. As part of Australia's vocal opposition to India's 1998 nuclear tests, two Indian naval officers (and two Pakistani naval officers), who were then on exchanges in Canberra, were asked to return home.

This action, which may to some seem a minor and forgettable event from a time long past, left a sour memory about Australia among many senior Indian military officers. Whether this reaction is justified or not (particularly when set against India's detonation of half a dozen nuclear devices), the incident continues to be regarded as indicating a lack of respect on the part of Australia, leaving a lasting negative perception about defence ties with Australia. To overcome this, Australia will have to make a considerable commitment to creating positive perceptions among a new generation of military officers.

Both the Indian and Australian armed forces (in particular, the navies) would be, as a matter of principle, likely to welcome initiatives that give greater access to training opportunities with their

counterparts. However, creating such opportunities will require overcoming bureaucratic inertia, especially on the Indian side. As discussed previously, India allocates considerably fewer resources to defence cooperation than Australia, and it is overwhelmed by suitors seeking engagement.

There are currently regular exchanges of mid-level and senior officers between Indian and Australian military colleges. India offers one position each year for a mid-level Australian officer at its Defence Services Staff College in Wellington, Tamil Nadu, and most years it also offers one position for a senior Australian officer at the National Defence College in New Delhi (which is relatively significant given that only four positions are offered annually to western countries).

Currently, two positions are offered annually to Indian officers at the Australian Defence College (ADC). This includes one position for a mid-level officer at the Australian Command and Staff College (out of 45 positions offered to foreign officers) and one position for a senior officer at the Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies (out of 23 positions offered to foreign officers). The Australian DoD funds these positions, which are rotated among the Indian services at India's discretion. However, there are no Indian officer cadets attending the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) (out of approximately 40 foreign officer cadets), although there is a standing offer of such positions to Indian cadets. There are also no Indian instructors at the ADC or ADFA (out of around 10 foreign instructors currently at those institutions). It is not clear whether Indian officers have ever been specifically sought out to fill such roles.

There is clearly significant room to expand the Indian presence at Australian military training institutions, but probably less scope in practice for the placement of more Australian officers at Indian institutions. Additional positions could be created for Indian officers at the Australian Defence College (perhaps specifically reserved for Indian naval officers) and positions could also be created for Indian instructors at the ADC and ADFA.

Person-to-person contacts can also be encouraged through exchanges of technical instructors or the provision of small training teams; for example, in the air forces where, as discussed

later, several common platforms are coming into use.

Importantly, the building of personal relationships must occur on both the military and civilian sides in the security community. This can include exchanges of civilian analysts and commentators between quality civilian think tanks and academic institutions focusing on security-related issues. The objective would be to promote public discussion and analysis of the relationship as part of the policy-making process.

4.5 Naval exercises and training

The principal point of contact between the Indian and Australian armed forces is between their respective navies. This reflects their shared interests in maritime security in the Indian Ocean, as well as the physical fact that navies commonly operate far from their home territories, frequently leading them to be in contact with their counterparts in other navies.

The Indian Navy has been the most active of any of the Indian armed services in pursuing defence diplomacy throughout East Asia and the Indian Ocean region. It currently conducts regular exercises with the navies of the U.S., UK, France, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, and Brazil, but not with the Royal Australian Navy.

In many ways, joint military exercises are the “pointy end” of defence cooperation. They provide an important forum for militaries to interact, learn from each other, and develop interoperability. But they are also an important symbol of a broader strategic relationship.

The institution of regular bilateral naval exercises has been an important objective for Australia for some time. Currently, the RAN and IN conduct irregular passing exercises (called “PASSEXes”), mostly while Australian ships are on passage to and from deployment to the Persian Gulf.

Australia’s requests for regular bilateral exercises have met with some bureaucratic resistance or inertia in New Delhi for some years, but during the visit of Indian Defence Minister A. K. Antony to Australia in June 2013, bilateral maritime exercises beginning in 2015 were announced. The scale and complexity of

these exercises will be a matter of discussion.

The ability of the IN to engage in regular exercises with other navies is seriously constrained by the Indian MoD, which has adopted an unofficial policy against the Indian Navy's participation in multilateral exercises.^{xv}

This policy arose following Exercise Malabar 07, when the annual India-U.S. naval exercises were expanded to include vessels from Australia, Japan, and Singapore. This was the largest naval exercise conducted by India and involved three carrier groups in the Bay of Bengal. The exercise created a significant political backlash in India, largely from leftists, who claimed that it signified a military alliance with the U.S. and/or a containment policy against China.

A consequence of the avoidance of multilateral exercises is that the Indian Navy is stretched by the number of exercises and the convention that exercise partners must travel to their partner's location in alternate years. The RAN may need to take into account the practical difficulties faced by the Indian Navy in sending vessels on long deployments by structuring exercises around RAN deployments in India's neighbourhood.

PASSEXes: Australia can certainly give more attention to the opportunities for PASSEXes, which have less impact on the IN's resources. PASSEXes – perhaps even including multiple vessels – represent a relatively easy and politically non-controversial way of increasing the frequency of interactions between Australian and Indian vessels. However, Australia may not be taking full advantage of this opportunity.

One senior serving Indian flag officer remarked that the RAN may not be utilising the opportunities for more substantial PASSEXes while on passage to and from the Persian Gulf area. There was a perception that the RAN may be more interested in R&R or in getting home, than in exercising with the Indian Navy. However, it is more likely that the RAN vessels were time-constrained by their scheduled dates of return to Australia which are very difficult to change. Pushing for extended PASSEXes

^{xv} With the apparent exception of the biennial IBSAMAR exercises conducted with South Africa and Brazil.

will therefore require a political decision in Canberra to reduce deployment time in the Persian Gulf area and spend more time in transit, including in visits to India.

Regular bilateral naval exercises: One result of A. K. Antony's visit to Australia in June 2013 was a loose commitment to commence regular bilateral naval exercises by 2015, although the details are yet to be negotiated. Holding exercises alternatively off India's east coast in the Bay of Bengal and off Fremantle (where Australia's submarine squadron is located) would facilitate the inclusion of an Anti-Submarine Warfare element in the exercises, which may be attractive to the IN.

An alternative could be to hold exercises out of India's Andaman Islands, which may permit the IN to commit greater resources while also fitting with the RAN's regular visits to Singapore and Malaysia. It would also underline India's and Australia's common interests in ensuring freedom of navigation through the Strait of Malacca.

Multilateral naval exercises: The IN would, in principle, also welcome the opportunity for multilateral exercises involving the RAN, but is currently prevented from participating in the Australian-hosted Exercise Kakadu. This series constitute the largest naval exercises in the Asia Pacific not involving the U.S. and includes participating warships from many Asia Pacific states. A senior serving Indian flag officer commented that the IN had previously received in principle approval from the MoD to participate in Kakadu and had made preparations to do so, but at the last moment was blocked by the MoD apparently on the grounds of cost.

In the longer term, there may also be potential for trilateral naval exercises involving India, Australia, and other key Indian Ocean partners such as Indonesia, Singapore or South Africa, focusing on Humanitarian and Disaster Relief (HADR) and/or Search and Rescue (SAR). New Delhi may see the involvement of other non-western states in addition to Australia as easing potential political concerns.

Cooperation in the development of amphibious capabilities: Amphibious capabilities could also potentially provide an important area of specialisation in the India-Australia

defence relationship. Both India and Australia strongly focus on the development of amphibious capabilities.

Over the last decade, the Indian Navy has developed its amphibious capabilities by acquiring the 16,000 tonne amphibious dock ship, INS Jalashwa and other landing craft, and is in the process of procuring up to four large multi-role support vessels. The Indian Army has recently designated an infantry division as amphibious, with brigades to be based in south India, west India, and the Andaman Islands.

Amphibious capabilities have also become a major focus for Australia. Australia is currently building two large 27,000 tonne Landing Helicopter Dock vessels with capacity for 18 helicopters, as well as landing vessels. An Australian Army unit based in Queensland has also been specifically designated for amphibious operations.

Although these capabilities will have significant implications for the ability of both India and Australia to project “hard” power in the Indian Ocean littoral, in practice their principal use will be in the projection of “soft” power through HADR operations and Non-combatant Evacuation Operations (NEOs).

In the longer term, amphibious exercises based on HADR and NEO operations could become a focus of the security relationship, as well as potentially creating opportunities for enhanced interaction between the respective armies and air forces.

Submarine training: Another opportunity for cooperation may be in the field of submarine-escape training. The RAN's Submarine Escape Training facility in Fremantle is one of only a handful of such facilities in the world. Australia has recently agreed to give the Indonesian Navy access to the facility and the RAN could also offer use of the facility to the IN. This may be an opportunity to develop closer ties between the Indian and Australian submarine forces, which are the largest and most advanced among Indian Ocean states.

4.6 Humanitarian and Disaster Relief/ Search and Rescue

HADR and SAR operations are likely to play an ever more important part in naval operations, both as a response to domestic political expectations and as a function of soft power. As discussed below, many saw the Indian Navy's HADR response to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami as a game-changer in its thinking about the importance of amphibious capabilities. India's recent NEO operations in Lebanon and Libya are also indicative of future requirements in that area. As the major naval powers in the Indian Ocean, India and Australia will increasingly be expected to take greater responsibility in responding to such emergencies in the region.

HADR and SAR are commonly-cited areas for cooperation between navies and related services without the political controversy in India that often accompanies defence cooperation with western states. As noted above, while HADR and SAR sit at the "soft" end of the spectrum of security cooperation, they can be useful fields in which to develop personal relationships and inter-operability. It also provides an opportunity to generate significant goodwill.

India's work with Australia, the U.S., and Japan in the multilateral naval response effort to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami is often seen as a major turning point in Indian understanding of the potential benefits of cooperation with other maritime democracies in the Asia Pacific region. The response of the four navies in 2004-2005 represented what was probably the largest multilateral naval operation involving the Indian Navy. India's response to the tsunami included the deployment of naval assets to Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and Indonesia. Australia's response focused on providing assistance to Indonesia.

According to some reports, the deployment of a U.S. naval task force to Indonesia led to a major change in public sentiment towards America, which was then being heavily criticised over the Iraq war. China, which did not possess naval assets such as amphibious craft or hospital ships, was conspicuous by its absence. Cooperation between these four states in relation to the tsunami led directly to the 2007 proposals for a Quadrilateral Security

Dialogue, which was intended to group India with Japan, the U.S. and Australia in a regular dialogue on regional security. The episode was an important lesson in the potentially broader strategic consequences of cooperation in HADR.

There are several ways that India and Australia and other Indian Ocean partners could work together in this area. For example, India and Australia could work with Indonesia in developing a system for responding to natural disasters in the Indian Ocean region similar to the FRANZ trilateral cooperation arrangement in the South Pacific. [56] Under the FRANZ arrangement, France, Australia, and New Zealand exchange information to ensure the best use of their assets and other resources for relief operations after cyclones and other natural disasters. The arrangement also provides for disaster relief coordination, engaging aid and defence elements from all three countries.

Australia is increasingly focussing on cooperation with Indian Ocean partners in disaster relief. Australia and Indonesia have established a joint Facility for Disaster Reduction (AIFDR) and there is potential for India to be included in similar arrangements. Australia has also been working with Indonesia and India through the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) to establish a tsunami early warning system for the Indian Ocean region. Cooperation between India and Australia in disaster relief could yield considerable benefits for relatively little cost.

4.7 Maritime policing and piracy

In coming years, maintenance and good order at sea is likely to become a shared concern of India and Australia. Increased globalisation and trade means that these problems can no longer be dealt with on a local basis and will require coordinated efforts. As the only two littoral states in the Indian Ocean with significant blue water capabilities, India and Australia will be expected to shoulder an increasing burden of responsibilities for maritime security in relation to non-state actors. This includes in responding to piracy, maritime terrorism, smuggling, people trafficking, and illegal fishing. Other Indian Ocean states such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, and South Africa have only limited capacities to contribute

in such areas, while the great majority of Indian Ocean states have little or no capabilities.

For several years after the beginning of this century, piracy was a matter of significant concern in the northeast Indian Ocean, particularly in and around the Strait of Malacca. However, with the improved economy in Indonesia and the end of the separatist insurgency in Indonesia's Aceh province, piracy is no longer a matter of critical concern in this region. Over the last five years or so, concerns about piracy have largely shifted towards the northwest Indian Ocean, mostly emanating from the failed state of Somalia. Both India and Australia are active in anti-piracy and/or counter maritime terrorism activities in this region.

Australia contributes to international efforts to fight piracy and maritime terrorism in the northwest Indian Ocean by participating in the Combined Military Forces in Combined Task Forces (CTF) 150 and 151. India undertakes anti-piracy operations in the region by itself, in very loose coordination with other international navies. Indian shipping is currently free to use the naval escort services provided by the Indian Navy, the Combined Military Forces (including the RAN), or the escort services provided by the Chinese, Russian, and Japanese navies. In practice, Indian registered ships generally take the first convoy that is available to them through the piracy-prone area off Somalia, whatever the nationality of the naval escort.

There is potential for cooperation between the RAN and IN to coordinate their efforts in the northeast Indian Ocean, perhaps in a manner akin to the "coordinated" patrols the IN currently undertakes with the Indonesian and Thai navies in the Andaman Sea. However, despite the many inefficiencies in the current arrangements, the IN appears to be content with its efforts and sees no pressing need to change them. In any event, incidents of piracy in the northwest Indian Ocean have dropped considerably in over the last year and feelings of "crisis" have receded somewhat.

A far more ambitious initiative could involve the promotion of a Memorandum of Understanding on Piracy among Indian Ocean littoral states and other interested states to set out agreed zones of responsibility in relation to piracy. While this might have

significant benefits in making anti-piracy efforts more efficient, it would involve the IN taking more active responsibility in a broad area and will therefore require a significant political commitment from New Delhi.

4.8 Maritime border protection and maritime domain awareness

The protection of India's maritime borders from terrorists and other illegal arrivals has become a major Indian security objective in recent years, particularly since the 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai, in which Pakistani-based terrorists infiltrated the port city of Mumbai from the sea. Maritime border protection has also become a major security focus for Australia over the last decade, partially reflecting concerns about maritime terrorism, although much of the current focus is on people smuggling.

One of the biggest challenges of maritime border protection is the coordination of various government agencies that have maritime responsibilities, which can include navies, coast guards, maritime police, customs, immigration, and fisheries. In India, the multiplicity of agencies, including poorly-funded agencies of various state governments, is of particular concern. India's experience in multi-agency security cooperation is not widely regarded as successful.

In the aftermath of the 2008 Mumbai attacks, India operationalised a so-called Multi Agency Centre in an attempt to synergise counterterrorism capabilities. It brings together all agencies responsible for internal security – ranging from the Intelligence Bureau, Research and Analysis Wing, defence intelligence agencies, and paramilitary forces – to share information. It has been planned to eventually work as the National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) to collate and analyse all internal security-related intelligence including terrorism. However, the NCTC project has run into political and bureaucratic controversies, ranging from its operational powers to where it should be organisationally situated.

In 2005, in the face of similar concerns, Australia established the Border Protection Command (BPC) as a multi-agency institution to act as Australia's primary law enforcement organisation in

Australia's maritime domain. The BPC^{xvi} uses assets and personnel assigned from Australian Customs and Border Protection Service, and the DoD. It is commanded by a naval admiral reporting to both the Chief of Defence Force and the Chief Executive Officer of the Customs and Border Protection Service.

This system was seen as an alternative to the cost and bureaucratic difficulties associated with establishing a separate Coast Guard. The BPC is regarded in Australia and elsewhere as being considerably successful in overcoming the "silo" problems arising from different agencies. A critical feature of the BPC is its unimpeded access to all maritime-related information held by federal agencies including the RAN, the federal police, customs, quarantine, fisheries, and others. India may be interested in gaining an understanding of some of the technical (if not bureaucratic) aspects of this apparently successful project.

Maritime domain awareness: Related to the issue of maritime border protection is the use of maritime intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) for the purpose of improving what is called "maritime domain awareness" (that is, the ability to track and identify all actors in a given maritime area). The vastness of distances across the Indian Ocean makes tracking of vessels and aircraft (both military and civil) in this space a very difficult task and currently beyond the resources of any single country. This makes it a ripe area for cooperation and an opportunity to build ongoing relationships between the services in a manner that may be less politically controversial for New Delhi than, for example, military exercises.

India has made major investments in its maritime ISR capabilities, including in and around the Bay of Bengal. Australia already has considerable maritime ISR capabilities throughout the eastern Indian Ocean in areas that abut or overlap with areas of strategic interest to India, including operating AP-3C Orion aircraft through Malaysia's Butterworth Air Base. In coming years, both India and Australia will acquire Boeing P-8 maritime aircraft as the backbone of their maritime ISR capabilities; both are also considering acquiring the giant Global Hawk UAVs from the U.S. The Indian Navy will operate India's maritime surveillance

^{xvi} Originally called the Joint Offshore Protection Command.

capabilities, while the RAAF will operate Australia's capabilities. These common platforms and sensors may create opportunities for cooperation in training and maintenance.

A key element of Australia's maritime border protection system is the Australian Maritime Identification System (AMIS), which is a multi-level secure global ocean surveillance system. It has been described as the "most successful major government IT project of all time." [57] It brings together all shipping data available to federal agencies, including information available under Australia's Long Range Identification and Tracking System (which tracks shipping within 1,000 nautical miles of Australia) as well as information commercially available through Lloyds and Automatic Identification Systems. This enables AMIS to combine all information on a vessel that may be obtained from governmental and commercial sources. The focus of AMIS also differs from the traditional focus on reported ships sailing to and from Australian ports, which in the past had allowed non-reporting ships to pass through the net.

The IN has expressed interest in working with Australia in shipping identification. While both India and Australia already have access to shared information about so-called "white" (merchant) shipping, it would be a significant step to extend information-sharing arrangements to so-called "grey" (naval) shipping or "red" (potentially hostile) shipping.

There are also considerable opportunities for cooperation between India, Australia and key security partners in Southeast Asia (such as Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia) in enhancing maritime domain awareness in the eastern Indian Ocean, the key straits through the Indonesian archipelago, and the South China Sea. It has, for example, been suggested that India and Australia could jointly sponsor a regional maritime domain partnership, which would involve collaboration with Southeast Asian states in intelligence-sharing, maritime domain awareness and coordinated patrolling. [58]

A regional arrangement co-sponsored by India and Australia and including key ASEAN maritime states such as Indonesia, can be a useful way of advancing ISR cooperation. At the same time, it will overcome political sensitivities about regional security

partnerships that include the U.S.

4.9 Cooperation between other military services

Several other potential areas of cooperation between the Indian and Australian armed services include the following:

Cooperation between the two air forces: For much of their history, the Indian Air Force (IAF) and RAAF used quite different equipment. However, many common platforms are now being operated or in the process of being acquired by the IAF and RAAF. This currently includes Hawk trainers (which are manufactured under license in India), C-17 Globemaster, and C-130 Hercules transport aircraft, and will soon also include P-8 Poseidon aircraft, A330 multi role tanker transports, and CH-47F Chinook heavy lift helicopters.

These common platforms provide opportunities for shared training, maintenance, and in the longer term, even exercises. According to one Australian observer, Australia's and India's interests in operating common air force platforms might place the relationship on a different footing compared with some other defence partners of India, which are sometimes seen as using cooperation as a way of showcasing potential equipment sales to India. Australia has no vested interests in this respect.

For its part, the RAAF sees considerable benefits from greater interaction with the IAF, including gaining the benefit of the IAF's perspectives on doctrine, war fighting and the operation of common platforms. This would provide the RAAF with access to different ways of thinking that is not dominated by the U.S. as is usually the case. The RAAF may also be interested in the IAF's particular experience in areas such as high altitude flying (which the IAF frequently practices in the Himalayas) and flight safety. The RAAF has suggested implementing greater cooperation with the IAF through the establishment of "sister" relationships between squadrons that operate common platforms. This could provide a structure for reciprocal visits and personal relationships. The Indian MoD is considering this suggestion.

The potential for cooperation through air exercises is somewhat

limited. The IAF has previously provided observers to Exercise Pitch Black, which is Australia's leading multilateral air force exercise, involving participants such as the U.S., Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia. In the future, there may be scope to expand the IAF's role to participate in the International Planning Group element in Exercise Pitch Black.

Currently, active consideration is not being given to bilateral exercises, but there may be long-term potential in the relatively non-controversial areas of HADR/SAR, with a focus on the shared maritime domain. In addition, given that India's maritime surveillance capabilities are largely operated through the Indian Naval Air Arm, it may make sense for the RAAF to give greater focus to developing a direct relationship with the Indian Navy.

Army-to-army cooperation: Opportunities for cooperation between the Indian and Australian armies may be more limited compared with the other services. The two armies are quite different in some ways – the Indian Army is a large standing force focused on border defence and internal security. The Australian Army is relatively small in terms of personnel and is largely structured as an expeditionary force. These differences in structure and missions may limit opportunities for exercises. Nevertheless, they both share a heritage and traditions inherited from Britain, and there may be opportunities for specialised cooperation, for example, in training for high altitude or amphibious operations.

Their shared histories of service can also be celebrated. Australian and Indian soldiers have fought alongside each other in numerous conflicts, including at Gallipoli (1915), in Palestine (1917-18), France (1914-18), North Africa (1940-42), Syria (1941), Malaya/Singapore (1941-42), and elsewhere in Southeast Asia (1941-45). These battle honours are an important reminder of the shared histories and traditions of the Indian and Australian armed forces, which can be a foundation for further cooperation. Australia should, for example, ensure that the relevant Indian Army regiments are invited to play a prominent role in Australia's Gallipoli centenary celebrations in 2015.

A potential focus for army-to-army cooperation can be the sharing of India's and Australia's knowledge and experience in peacekeeping operations; both countries have long been

contributors to such operations. India has contributed to some 40 United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations with more than 100,000 personnel. [59] By number of troops, India is one of the largest contributors of any country in the world. Australia has contributed to more than 100 peace operations involving some 30,000 personnel. Australians were part of the first group of UN military observers anywhere in the world (in Indonesia in 1947), and were the first to deploy into the field.

Enhanced cooperation in the training of peacekeepers can be an important opportunity to demonstrate India's and Australia's shared commitment to the UN and international stability. It can also be an important opportunity for Australia to learn from India's expertise in this area, while India might benefit from Australia's recent experience in stabilisation operations among Pacific island states.

India operates the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping in New Delhi, which also provides the Secretariat of the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres. Australia's Peacekeeping Operations Training Centre is located in Newcastle, New South Wales. In the past Australia and India have exchanged students and instructors to their peacekeeping training centres on an ad hoc basis. More focused cooperation in peacekeeping training may be possible and in the longer term the potential for bilateral peacekeeping exercises can be explored. India currently conducts peacekeeping exercises with several regional states, while Australia conducts a biennial peacekeeping exercise with Thailand.

4.10 Defence technology cooperation

Some see defence technology as a potentially important area of focus in the security relationship. India's objectives relating to defence technology have formed a key part of its relationships with major partners such as the Soviet Union/Russia, France, Israel, and the U.S., and increasingly also regional partners. In 2013, New Delhi announced that it was acquiring at least 15 US-2 amphibious aircraft from Japan as part of an enhanced strategic partnership with Tokyo. The potential to gain access to defence technology is likely to get New Delhi's attention. Australia has strengths

in some important niche areas that are likely to be of interest to the Indian armed forces, especially the Indian Navy; these include technologies related to radar and technologies potentially suitable for undersea applications (including HAPTIC technologies). Another obvious area for cooperation is in naval shipbuilding, Australia's largest defence-related industry. Over the last 20 years, Australia has constructed frigates and submarines, and is currently constructing air warfare destroyers and amphibious vessels. India's large naval shipbuilding industry is also highly advanced. In recent years private shipbuilders such as Pipavav Defence have become increasingly prominent in India and they could be potential partners with Australian companies.

But there are also strong reasons for caution in using defence exports by Australian companies as a means to enhance the bilateral relationship. The most significant is the parlous state of India's defence procurement system, which is Byzantine, dysfunctional, riddled with corruption, and as a consequence barely functioning. With few exceptions, defence acquisitions involving foreign private suppliers are at a virtual standstill, although some major sales made on a government-to-government basis (such as the purchase of fighter aircraft from France) are moving ahead, slowly.

Australian defence suppliers are likely to be extremely hesitant about the risks of trying to do business in the Indian defence sector unless significant changes are made in the Indian defence procurement system. That seems to be many years away.

But Australian companies may have opportunities that do not necessarily involve exposure to the Indian defence procurement process. In naval shipbuilding, this could include programmes for the joint training of naval engineers or, for example, exploring the interests of third parties in the Indian and Australian defence industries. The huge paramilitary forces maintained by the Indian central and state governments are also major buyers, although this market tends to be keenly priced and unsuitable for high-end, high-priced products.

Another possibility is the opportunity for direct cooperation between the government defence research organisations – India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Australia's Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO).

In theory at least there is considerable scope for cooperation and joint projects in shared areas of interest. In recent years, India's DRDO has entered into technology-sharing agreements with its counterparts in countries such as South Korea and Singapore.

But Australia's DSTO may not currently consider India as a priority international partner, and its arrangements with key technology partners may constrain its ability to exchange information with the DRDO. The DRDO's role as both an R&D organisation and a manufacturer is also seen as a cause of potential complications. The caution of the DSTO in engaging with the DRDO may only change as part of a broader government approach of enhanced cooperation with India.

More generally, some observers question the utility of trying to use defence technology cooperation – particularly technology procurement – as a means of developing a closer security relationship. India has, in the past, resisted attempts of several of its defence technology partners (such as the former Soviet Union and currently the U.S.) to leverage defence sales into a broader defence relationship. A Pentagon study found that – in contrast to the approach of many countries – senior Indian military officers tend to see defence technology procurement as quite separate from a broader defence relationship and are resistant to allowing equipment acquisitions to be used as a reason for operational cooperation. [60] Experience has also demonstrated that a defence procurement relationship with India, even by major powers, can often be a cause of considerable disputes and political irritations in the bilateral relationship.

For these reasons, although there may be opportunities for defence technology cooperation in certain niche areas, both Canberra and New Delhi may be cautious about trying to focus on this area as a major aspect in developing the relationship.

4.11 Cooperation in Antarctic research

A further area of potential cooperation is in Antarctic research. While not directly security related, this area relates directly to the shared oceanic domain and can potentially create goodwill and a feeling of oceanic partnership.

Australia's efforts in the Antarctic are conducted through the Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) based in Tasmania, while India's are conducted through the National Centre for Antarctic and Oceanic Research (NCAOR), based in Goa, which reports to the Ministry of Earth Sciences. Both organisations are wholly devoted to scientific research.

Australia has had a permanent presence in the Antarctic since 1954 and now operates four permanent bases. Australia claims more than 40% of the continent as Australian territory. Although India has had a permanent presence since 1984, there has been relatively little interaction between the two countries. India's Maitri Station is on the other side of the continent from the Australian bases. However, the opening in 2013 of a new Indian base, called Bharati Station, which is some 120 kilometres from Australia's Davis base, opens considerable opportunities for cooperation in logistics and scientific research.

Currently, all of India's air logistics to the Antarctic are channelled through South Africa using the Russian-sponsored DROMLAN consortium. This makes sense for the supply to India's Maitri Station (located south of Cape Town, Australia), but less so for Bharati Station. Supplies for Bharati are now taken to Maitri Station and then airlifted a further 4,000 kilometres across the middle of Antarctica, including a refuelling stop at a Japanese base.

Bharati could potentially use the Australian logistical supply system, which operates through Tasmania, which is used to supply Davis Station. Similarly, it may make sense to share maritime supply arrangements. Currently, a vessel chartered by the NCAOR must make a 50-day triangular run between Cape Town, Maitri Station and Bharati Station, severely restricting its abilities to make deliveries to Bharati. The potential for exchange of scientific personnel between the AAD and NCAOR is also unrealised.

The India-Australia Security Engagement Opportunities and Challenges

Conclusion

As India rises as a major power, it aspires to be seen as a “net security provider” to its region. This role will require not only expanding military capabilities, but also security relationships. Although India has been successful in developing relationships with small Indian Ocean states, it has made less progress in developing closer security relationships with the middle powers of the region. This paper argues that stronger relationships with middle powers such as Australia will be a key element in India achieving its ambitions towards a leadership role in the Indian Ocean.

For many years, India and Australia largely ignored each other in strategic terms. But their spheres of strategic interest are now converging, bringing them into much closer contact than ever before. There is now a considerable alignment in their strategic interests on many issues, including in relation to the balance of power in the Indian Ocean and the maintenance of regional stability. As the two largest resident naval powers of the Indian Ocean, they will also be increasingly expected by regional states and others to work together to contribute to maritime security in the region.

But in order to develop a closer security relationship, both India and Australia have to overcome a number of challenges, including their different histories and strategic traditions, and different bureaucratic and decision-making processes. This will be no easy task and will require sustained commitment from both sides.

There is considerable scope for greater cooperation between India and Australia in their shared maritime domain, and this is likely to be the focus of their security relationship in coming years.

While India and Australia have expanded the number of bilateral dialogues, there needs to be more focus on concrete cooperation. Ideally, this should start with small and relatively non-controversial areas that do not require major expenditure.

Some “quick wins” in terms of enhanced cooperation in the near term could include:

- working together to **enhance the effectiveness of IOR-ARC and IONS** as regional institutions
- promoting an increase in **people-to-people** contacts among military personnel and others in the security and defence community. Australia can take the lead in opening more training and instructing positions for Indian officers in Australian establishments, as well as offering to provide small training teams to India on a regular basis in areas that are of interest to India.
- exploring additional ways in which the **navies can work together**. This includes:
 - exploring opportunities for **more Passing Exercises**, by Australian vessels travelling to and from the Persian Gulf.
 - agreeing on **bilateral naval exercises** with the objective of enhancing the relationship in niche areas.
 - encouraging a strong Indian presence at Australian-hosted **multilateral naval exercises**, such as Exercise Kakadu.
 - opening Australian **submarine escape training facilities** for use by the Indian Navy.
- expanded cooperation in **humanitarian and disaster relief**. This could include putting in place permanent arrangements for the exchanging of information on the use of assets and resources for relief operations.

There are many other opportunities for expanded cooperation that may take longer to come to fruition, including:

- greater **cooperation on non-proliferation issues**, including working towards India’s membership of existing international non-proliferation regimes, starting with the Australia Group.

- expanding security dialogues to include **other Indian Ocean partners** with the aim of working together on matters of shared interest (e.g. in disaster relief or in enhancing maritime domain awareness).
- exploring the benefits of the Indian and Australian navies working together to develop their **amphibious capabilities**.
- exploring the potential for **enhancing maritime domain awareness** in the eastern Indian Ocean through cooperative arrangements. This could involve greater exchange of information obtained by existing national systems and/or greater use of shared ISR resources.
- enhanced cooperation between the **RAAF, IAF, and the Indian Naval Air Arm**. This could potentially include exchanges on training and maintenance where common platforms are in use.
- enhanced cooperation between the **Indian and Australian Armies**. This could potentially focus on areas such as peacekeeping.
- exploring defence technology cooperation between the **Indian DRDO and Australian DSTO** in identified niche areas.
- cooperation in **Antarctic logistics and research** as an expression of India and Australia's shared interests in the greater region and their shared commitment to the protection of the maritime environment.

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