



# Learning from Experience: Volume IV: Lessons from Australia's Collins Submarine Program (Volume 4)

*John F. Schank, Cesse Ip, Kristy N. Kamarck, Robert E. Murphy, Mark V. Arena*

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Large, complex submarine design and construction programs demand personnel with unique skills and capabilities supplemented with practical experiences in their areas of expertise. Recognizing the importance of past experiences for successful program management, the Australian government asked the RAND Corporation to develop a set of lessons learned from its Collins submarine program that could help inform future program managers. Collins was the first submarine built in Australia. RAND investigated how operational requirements were set for the Collins class; explored the acquisition, contracting, design, and build processes that the program employed; and assessed the plans and activities surrounding integrated logistics support for the class. Although Australia had intended to take an evolutionary approach in procuring the Collins class by using an existing design, no design was suitable, so the program pursued a developmental platform and a developmental combat system. This introduced a high degree of risk into the program, particularly in the combat system technology. Among the important lessons: All appropriate organizations should be involved in a new submarine program from its inception, the majority of the design drawings should be completed before construction begins, and a thorough and adequate testing program should be developed. Because designing and building a submarine is one of the most complex undertakings for a new program, they require careful management and oversight.

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