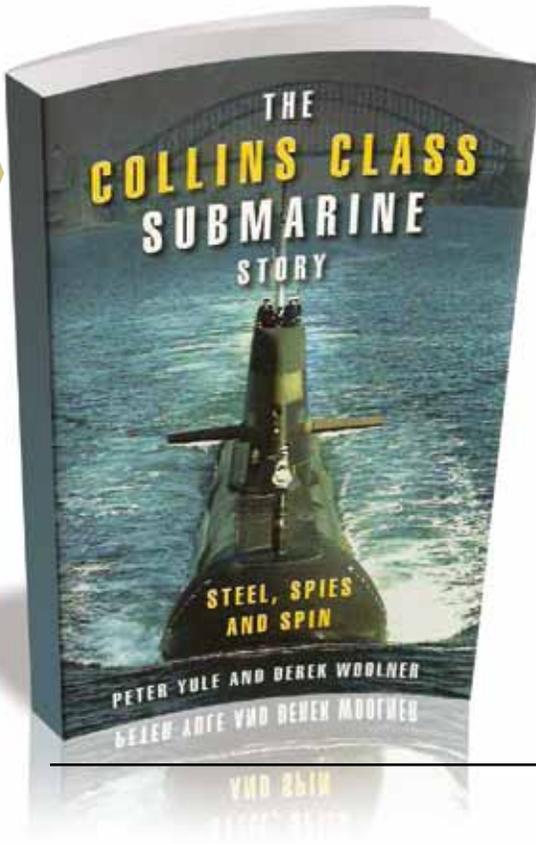


# PROFESSIONAL READING LIST

The Defense Acquisition Professional Reading List is intended to enrich the knowledge and understanding of the civilian, military, contractor, and industrial workforce who participate in the entire defense acquisition enterprise. These book reviews/recommendations are designed to complement the education and training that are vital to developing the essential competencies and skills required of the Defense Acquisition Workforce. Each issue of the *Defense Acquisition Research Journal (ARJ)* will contain one or more reviews of suggested books, with more available on the *ARJ* Website.

We encourage *ARJ* readers to submit reviews of books they believe should be required reading for the defense acquisition professional. The reviews should be 400 words or fewer, describe the book and its major ideas, and explain its relevance to defense acquisition. Please send your reviews to the Managing Editor, *Defense Acquisition Research Journal*:  
*Norene.Fagan-Blanch@dau.mil*.



## Featured Book

*The Collins Class Submarine Story:  
 Steel, Spies, and Spin*

**Author(s):**

Peter Yule and Derek Woolner

**Publisher:**

Cambridge, Cambridge University Press

**Copyright Date:**

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**ISBN:**

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**Hard/Softcover:**

Hardcover, 402 pages

**Reviewed by:**

John F. Schank, Senior Operations  
 Research Analyst, RAND Corporation

**Review:**

The Royal Australian Navy (RAN) operated submarines built and supported by Great Britain for much of the 20th century. As the RAN's British-built *Oberon* class submarines were reaching their mid-life point in the early 1980s, the RAN was finding it difficult and expensive to support the desired operational availability of their submarine fleet. In this environment, and with much debate and deliberation, Australia decided that the new submarines needed to replace the *Oberon* boats would be built in Australia. The resulting *Collins* class submarine program was the largest, most expensive, and most controversial military project undertaken by Australia's defense community.

The authors of this superb history of the *Collins* class program thoroughly describe the numerous players, their intentions, and their interactions during the 20 years from the beginnings of the program to the delivery of the sixth and final submarine in the class. The program produced not only one of the largest and most capable diesel submarines in the world, it also created a new national industry. However, it was marked with technical difficulties and political intervention. As the authors state, "It is a story of heroes and villains, grand passions, intrigue, lies, spies and backstabbing" (p. xviii).

The authors tell their story in four parts:

- The early years of debate on whether Australia could actually build submarines, followed by the solicitation and awarding of a design and construction contract to an alliance of several companies. Acquisition professionals will find informative the process used to set requirements, the contracting structure, and the interactions between the buyer and the seller.
- The first few years of design and construction, when enthusiasm and newness created an atmosphere of cooperation and progress. However, there were several issues arising between the corporations involved in the prime contractor partnership. The design developed by the Swedish shipbuilder, Kockums, was based on a Swedish Navy boat whose operational capabilities were very different from those desired by Australia. Technical problems began to emerge, especially in the combat system, and construction lagged. Acquisition professionals will benefit from the description of the combat system contract environment as well as the creation of a new cooperative venture and a green-field shipyard.

- A several-year period when the bloom fell off the rose. This period was marked by increasing technical problems and construction delays. The public's perception of the program problems was inflamed by several disparaging media articles. The original partnership changed dramatically as Australia assumed the ownership of the Australian Submarine Corporation (ASC). Acquisition professionals will find enlightening the process through which the contracting arrangements changed and the recognition that the government had substantially underestimated the risks in undertaking such a complex program for the first time.
- The last several years of the program when the *Collins* submarines finally became operationally capable with the help of the United States Navy. Problems during this time period switched from designing and building the submarines to providing the logistics support needed to attain operational goals. This problem persists today as marked by new studies seeking to identify the inherent problems in supporting the *Collins* class submarines and the future costs needed to keep the boats operationally ready during the second halves of their operational lives.