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## Media Release

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### **CANBERRA, November 29, 2018 – Australian think tank proposes next steps for Australian Navy development of unmanned and autonomous systems.**

The Institute for Regional Security publishes Kokoda Papers which are research reports on topics related to the maintenance of regional security.

The latest paper in the series is titled *Unmanned and Autonomous Vehicles in the Maritime Environment Circa 2035: Opportunities and Challenges for the Royal Australian Navy*.

The paper will be launched by Senator the Hon David Fawcett, Assistant Minister for Defence and Commodore Stephen Hughes, CSC RAN, Director-General Littoral today.

The Australian Government has embarked on a program to build a 5th generation Navy through the Navy Shipbuilding Plan. Concurrently, rapid technological advancements are occurring in the field of unmanned and autonomous systems, which have the potential to provide significant force multiplier benefits to Navy.

The Institute for Regional Security Report, in collaboration with the Royal Australian Navy, Leidos, Accenture, Northrop Grumman, Thales, CEA Technologies and Lockheed Martin explores the application of unmanned and autonomous vehicles in Royal Australian Navy operations circa 2035. It discusses Australia's security context, the rapid advancements in technology currently occurring in this field, challenges to be overcome and opportunities for operational employment. It recommends the Royal Australian Navy embrace a degree of risk in this area, form partnerships with industry and establish test and trials units for surface and sub-surface vehicles with a view to rapidly introducing this technology into the Fleet during the coming decade.

Key recommendations from the report are

- (1) Navy establish a program for management of unmanned and autonomous systems.
- (2) Navy establish a funding stream for unmanned and autonomous vehicle testing and trials.
- (3) To expedite delivery of capability, Navy should consider partnering with industry/service providers/DSTG/IFRS to develop capability solutions outside the traditional capability development process.
- (4) Navy consider establishing a range for the testing and trials of unmanned and autonomous vehicles in the maritime environment.
- (5) Navy establish small test and trial elements within the Surface and Submarine Forces to develop expertise in systems that may meet emerging operational requirements.

(6) Navy work closely with the newly established Trusted Autonomous Systems Cooperative Research Centre.

(7) Navy partner with a think tank or other organisation to mount a conference in 2019 on unmanned and autonomous systems in the maritime environment, and

(8) Navy develop a roadmap out to 2035 for unmanned and autonomous systems.

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**Media are invited to attend the launch of the paper at a lunch at the Park Hyatt Canberra at 1200 Contact: Catherine Scott 0416 117 291**

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