



Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments

STUDIES

Gateway to the Indo-Pacific: Australian Defense Strategy and the Future of the Australia-U.S. Alliance

November 9, 2013 | **Jim Thomas, Zack Cooper, Iskander Rehman**

Resources: Strategy & Policy

This report examines the state of the U.S.-Australia military alliance, detailing the geopolitical shifts currently underway in Australia's immediate neighborhood and outlining the extent to which these developments signal the advent of a new era. The seismic nature of these changes has engendered a vigorous strategic debate within Australia over the future of its defense ties with the United States.

The report provides a succinct overview of ongoing debates and examines three different schools of thought in Australia: the *Alliance Minimalist School*, the *Alliance Maximalist School*, and the *Incrementalist School*. Many of the traditional assumptions at the heart of Australian strategic culture are in the process of being overturned, and the U.S.-Australia alliance is increasingly perceived as a bedrock for sustained regional stability.

Building on these observations, the report offers four ways in which Australia could make greater contributions to regional security and deterrence.