

# Defense Debrief

## WORTH A READ:

### 1 **Strengthening of Military & Defense Ties Between US & Japan**

On April 10<sup>th</sup>, President Biden shared some exciting news regarding US-Japan defense and intelligence collaboration, announcing initiatives to modernize C2 architectures, foster US-Japan interoperability, and support collaborative training and mission planning focused on the Indo-Pacific.

President Biden also announced the establishment of a US-Japan-Australia air and missile defense architecture. As a part of this announcement, Biden suggested his administration is considering options for integrating Japan into AUKUS.

As BCE Consulting (BCE) tracks the evolution of AUKUS, with particular emphasis on AUKUS Pillar II, we will be keenly watching how Japan's defense-only requirements impact advanced technology development.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/biden-kishida-to-announce-ramped-up-military-partnership/>

### 2 **CCA Affordability and Capability Tradeoffs**

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Allvin shared his thoughts regarding the Air Force's commitment to managing CCA costs by "writing affordability into the requirements." While this is not unexpected given budget tightness and the exploding costs of many defense programs, particularly airborne platforms, this decision does not come without tradeoffs. The Air Force will likely sacrifice capabilities, and therefore the missions CCAs can support, if it stands firm on its commitment to affordability.

On the flip side, Air Force Secretary Frank Kendall's commentary regarding the potential to include our nation's "closest" and "most strategic" partner nations in upcoming CCA increments does provide an alternative pathway to reduce costs for US taxpayers. If the Air Force is able to complement DOD funding with investment from our allies, the Air Force may be able to mitigate capability sacrifices while maintaining affordability.

BCE's A&D practice will continue to monitor the evolution of the CCA initiative with a particular eye towards how the upcoming down-selects and decisions regarding allied involvement play out.

<https://insidedefense.com/daily-news/air-force-write-affordability-cca-requirements>

## WORTH A LISTEN:

### 3 **Assessing the 2024 Annual Threat Assessment**

Passing along an insightful episode of the Net Assessment podcast where Christopher Preble, Zack Cooper, and Melanie Marlowe discuss the 2024 Annual Threat Assessment. In particular, the discussion focuses on the areas that the intel community highlights as threats over the next year and the threats that are not mentioned or discussed only in limited detail. I found the discussion regarding the lack of attention paid to the conflict in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden particularly compelling. While this ongoing conflict may not be top of mind for the IC, it has certainly impacted the priorities of the US Navy as the service sets requirements for new capabilities to counter emerging threats, namely C-UAS capabilities.

<https://warontherocks.com/2024/03/the-2024-annual-threat-assessment/>