

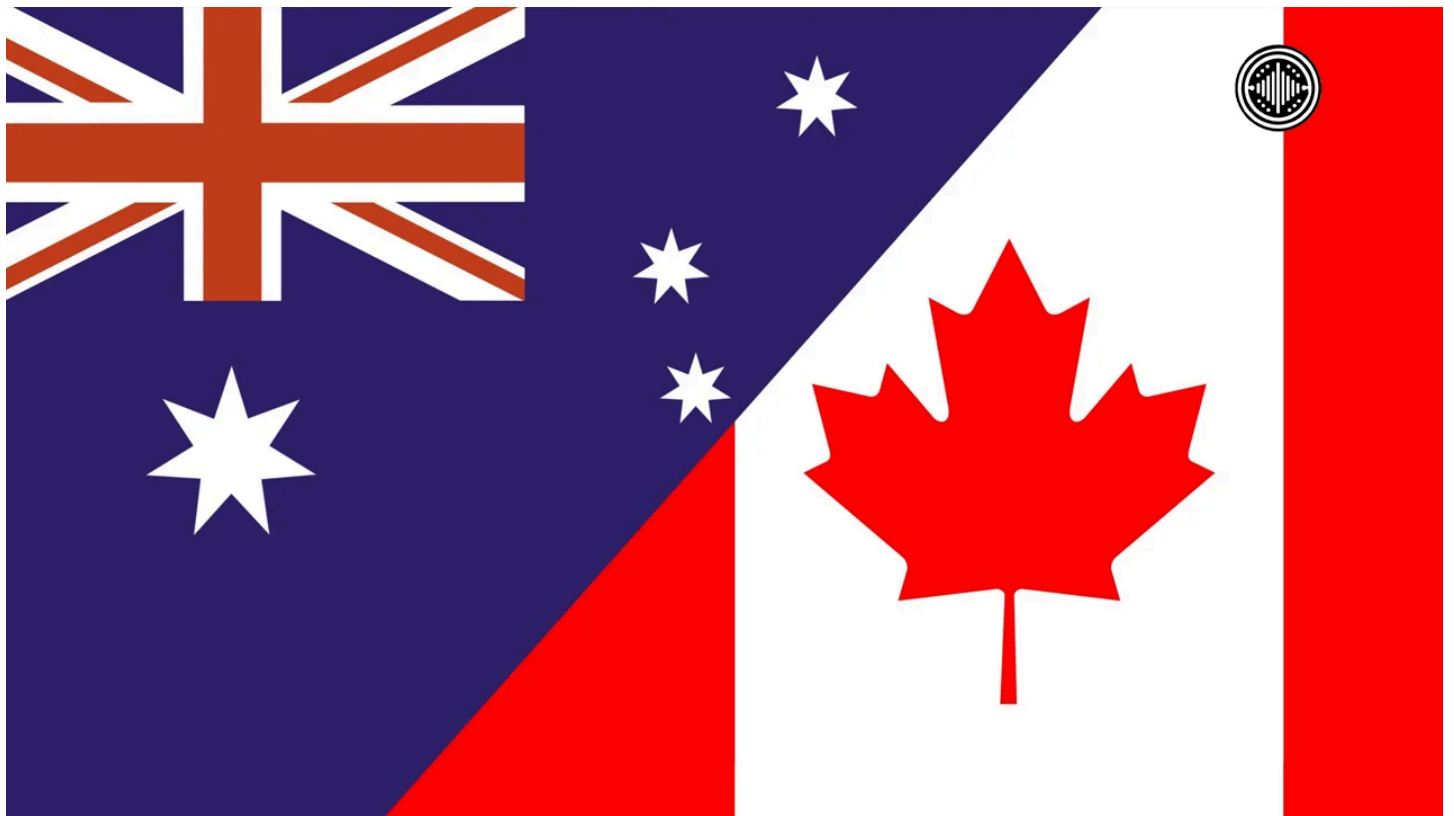
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Australia and Canada Join Forces on Over-the-Horizon Radar Development

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Australia and Canada have forged a \$6.6 billion partnership to advance Over-the-Horizon Radar (OTHR) technology, leveraging Australia's world-leading Jindalee Operational Radar Network (JORN) to bolster Canada's Arctic defence. Announced in 2025, the deal aims to counter rising threats from hypersonic missiles and strengthen North American security. This article explores the collaboration, its strategic importance, and concerns about domestic industry impacts.

The agreement, signed on June 20, 2025, unites Australia's Defence Science and Technology Group (DSTG) with Canada's Department of National Defence (DND) and Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC) to tackle Arctic-specific radar challenges. Australian Defence Minister Richard Marles hailed it as potentially "the biggest defence industry export in our history," per ABC News, with BAE Systems Australia leading the project. Canada's Arctic Over-the-Horizon Radar (A-OTHR) will enhance the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) by detecting air and maritime threats up to 3,000 kilometers away, vital as Russia and China advance hypersonic weaponry. Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, announcing the deal in Iqaluit, emphasized sovereignty, stating, "We cannot look first to others to defend our nation."

The partnership builds on Australia's JORN, which monitors vast sea and airspaces by bouncing signals off the ionosphere. Canada's \$6 billion investment, part of NORAD modernization, aims for operational capability by 2029, addressing Arctic vulnerabilities amid climate-driven access and geopolitical tensions. However, Canadian firms like D-TA Systems expressed frustration, with chairman Dipak Roy calling the decision a "slap in the face" to local innovation, as Ottawa overlooked domestic radar expertise despite \$30 million in prior funding. Critics argue this reflects a broader trend of favoring foreign systems, potentially undermining Canada's defence industry.

While the deal strengthens Australia-Canada ties and diversifies trade amid strained US relations, it raises questions about balancing sovereignty with global alliances. Australia's export success hinges on navigating these complexities, but Canada's choice to prioritize speed over local industry sparks debate. Will this collaboration fortify North American security, or shortchange Canadian innovation?