

# Board of Directors and Executive Leadership

Thales Australia



# Board of Directors

# Executive Leadership

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Thales Australia





## Duncan Lewis AO DSC CSC

Board Chair, Non-Executive Director

Duncan Lewis AO DSC CSC was appointed Chair of the Thales Australia Board on 1 June 2023, after serving on the Board as a Non-Executive Director from 2020. Duncan brings a wealth of knowledge and experience, acquired over his 47-year career within the Australian Defence Force, Intelligence Community and Government.

Duncan retired as Director-General of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation in 2019 following a career that included Commander of Australia's Special Air Service Regiment, National Security Advisor to the Federal Government, Secretary of the Department of Defence and Ambassador to Belgium, the European Union, Luxembourg and NATO.

He joined the Australian Army after schooling in Western Australia, and graduated from the Royal Military College Duntroon in 1975. His 33-year career in the military culminated in his appointment as Major General, Special Operations Commander Australia.

In 2005, Duncan joined the National Security Division within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

and was appointed as Australia's inaugural National Security Adviser in 2008. In 2011, building on almost four decades of experience in defence and national security communities, Duncan was appointed Secretary of the Department of Defence.

Late in 2012, Duncan was appointed Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg, the European Union and NATO. On 15 September 2014, Duncan was appointed Director-General of Security and head of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation.

Duncan was awarded Officer of the Order of Australia in 2005 for his service as the inaugural Special Operations Commander Australia.



## Belinda Hutchinson AC

Deputy Chair, Non-Executive Director

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**Belinda Hutchinson AM commenced as Thales Australia Board Chair in 2015. After 8 years in the role, Belinda took up a non-Executive Director role on the Board in June, 2023 and later Deputy Chair in January 2026.**

Belinda Hutchinson is Chancellor of the University of Sydney and sits on a number of not-for-profit boards including Australian Philanthropic Services and St Vincent's Health Australia's NSW Advisory board.

She was previously Chairman of QBE Insurance Group, a director of Telstra, Coles Myer, Energy Australia, TAB, St Vincent's Health Australia, Crane Group, a non-executive director of AGL Energy and President of the NSW State Library Council.

In the 2020 Queens Birthday Honours, Belinda was awarded the country's top honour, a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC), in recognition of her eminent service to business, tertiary education and scientific research, and for her philanthropic endeavours to address social disadvantage.



## Jeff Connolly

### Chief Executive Officer/Director

For more than 35 Years, Jeff has held senior management and governance positions in Australia, Asia and Europe. He has broad B2B and B2G experience supplying customers with technology based product, systems, solutions and services which drive sustainable outcomes through operational efficiency and global competitiveness.

He passionately advocates development of 'home grown' Australian, future oriented capabilities in advanced manufacturing, engineering, innovative technology and use inspired research.

He has played an integral role in driving Industry 4.0 adoption in Australia, Chairing the Prime Minister's Industry 4.0 Taskforce – and was recognised for his contribution via his Adjunct Professorship at Swinburne University of Technology.

Jeff is currently the Chairman of Australia's Economic Accelerator (AEA) Advisory Board where he brings a wealth of experience in research translation and commercialisation related to the National Reconstruction Fund's priority areas.

Jeff recently Chaired the Federal Government's University Research Commercialisation Taskforce and was a Panel member tasked with proposing the framework for an overarching long term NSW Industry Policy.

He is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, National Australian Industry Group Victorian Branch Council President and National Director, Director of the European Australian Business Council.

On his move to Thales Australia Jeff said, "I was compelled by the extent of Thales's existing advanced manufacturing footprint in Australia and the application of technologies that go to the heart of the defence of our nation".

Previous Activities included:  
State Advisory Council President and National Director of Committee for Economic Development Australia (CEDA), Chairman German Australian Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Member of the Australian German Advisory Group, Member of the Victorian Government's Future Industries Advisory Group.

Originally from Melbourne, Jeff is a graduate of the University of Melbourne, is an Adjunct Professor at Swinburne University and Doctor of Engineering (hc) at University of Technology Sydney.



## Millar Crawford

### Non-Executive Director

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**Millar Crawford is a seasoned executive with extensive experience in the aerospace and transportation industries. Most recently, he held the position of Executive Vice-President of Ground Transportation Systems at Thales, a role held since 2015, operating out of Paris.**

Over the years, Millar has held various leadership positions within Thales, including Chief Operating Officer for Thales Australia from 2010 to 2014 and Vice President for Thales Land Systems from 2006 to 2010. As Chief Executive Officer of Thales Air Defence Limited from 2002 to 2006 in Belfast, Millar demonstrated a strong ability to lead and innovate in high-stakes environments.

Before rejoining Thales, Millar worked at The Chesapeake Group as Managing Director for Boxmore Healthcare Packaging from 1998 to 2002, and prior to that, served as Director of Procurement at Bombardier in Belfast for a brief period in 1997-1998. Millar's foundational career began with Thales in the Belfast office, where he held several roles including Director of Operations and Programmes for the Short Missile

Systems Joint Venture from 1994 to 1996, and Head of Procurement and Materials at Short Brothers plc from 1991 to 1994. Their career in engineering started as a Design Engineer for the Missile Systems Division at Short Brothers plc from 1981 to 1991.

Academically, Millar earned a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from Ulster University between 1985 and 1987 and holds a Master of Science (MS) in Mechanical Engineering from Queen's University Belfast, which they completed in 1981.

With a career marked by leadership roles and a commitment to innovation and operational excellence, Millar has significantly contributed to the growth and success of the organizations they have been part of, establishing a reputation as a forward-thinking leader in technology and engineering solutions.



## Alex Cresswell

### Non-Executive Director

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**Alex Cresswell is a graduate of Southampton University in the UK, with Honours degree in Aeronautics and Astronautics.**

He began his career at BAE Systems before joining Thomson-CSF (now Thales Communications) in 1992, firstly occupying various positions in Business Development and Strategy, then as Director of UK Programmes.

In January 2002, he was appointed Director of Major Systems for Aerospace business within Thales UK. From 2005 to 2007, he became VP of ISTAR and UAV systems within Thales's Aerospace Division. Between 2007 and 2010, he was leading Land & Joint Systems activities within Thales UK.

In 2010 he was appointed as Director of the Land Defence division.

In February 2013, Alex Cresswell was promoted as Executive Vice-President, Land Defence and Air Systems.

In February 2020, he was appointed Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of Thales UK.





## Chris Jenkins, L. d'H, AO

### Non-Executive Director

**Chris Jenkins is a defence industry leader, a passionate believer in local skills, and a strong advocate for Australian engineering, technology, design and manufacturing. Focusing on delivering performance advantages for major defence and infrastructure customers, he has played a crucial role in transforming the company into one of Australia's largest suppliers and exporters of mission critical products and services.**

Chris has held senior roles in Thales locally and internationally for over 35 years. He is currently a non-executive Director of the Thales Australia & NZ Board. From January 2008 until August 2022 he was the CEO of Thales Australia and NZ. This followed two years as Vice President Operations, and before that three years as CEO of a Thales consortium in the Netherlands, delivering that country's national public transport smartcard program.

Prior to this, Chris was Managing Director of Thales Underwater Systems in Australia from 1999 to 2003. He previously held senior marketing, sales and project director roles in the business, and was also a key player in its creation as a Thales/GEC joint venture in 1996.

Chris started in the defence industry as a mechanical engineer with Racal in 1981, Plessey in 1983, and then GEC Marconi in 1990, heading up its Underwater Systems business in Australia.

He is currently the National President of the Australian Industry Group and member of the AIG Defence Council.

He has a longstanding involvement in large-scale projects in critical industry sectors, and was previously Chairman of the International Centre for Complex Project Management, as well as a member of the Defence Portfolio Ministerial Advisory Council and the DSTO Advisory Board, and an Advisory Board member of the Centre for Defence Industry Capability. He was also a Non-Executive Board Director of Naval Group Australia.

Chris is an Honorary Fellow of the AIPM, a Fellow of Engineers Australia, a Patron of RUSI NSW, and an Adjunct Professor of the University of NSW. In 2013 he received the Insignia of Knight in the French National Order of the Legion of Honour.

In 2025, Chris was awarded Officer of the Order of Australia for his distinguished service to engineering, to the advanced manufacturing industry, to business and to the community.



## Warwick Strachan

### Chief Financial Officer

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**Warwick Strachan was appointed Chief Financial Officer for Thales Australia and New Zealand on 1 March 2018.**

Since joining the group in South Africa in 1998, Warwick has performed various roles across a number of businesses and large projects.

He has significant international experience having spent four years in Asia working across a number of Thales International subsidiaries based in Singapore, China and India.

Relocating to Australia in early 2008 he supported the transformation programme of Thales Australia's Operations. He was subsequently responsible for the Protected Vehicles business overseeing the Hawkei Development and Bushmaster production before being appointed to his current position.





## Melinda Conrad

Deputy Chairman, Non-Executive Director

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**Melinda Conrad is a Non-Executive Director of the Thales Australia Board, bringing board and executive experience across critical infrastructure and industry sectors.**

Melinda currently serves on the boards of Virgin Australia, Ampol Limited, Stockland Corporation Limited, and PentenAmio Pty Ltd. Over the past decade, her focus has centred on organisations that constitute critical infrastructure for the nation, spanning the intersection of government, industry and national security.

Her previous board roles include ASX Limited, OFX Group Limited, David Jones Limited, the George Institute for Global Health, and the Clinical Excellence

Commission. She is a Director of the Centre for Independent Studies and serves on the Australian Institute of Company Directors' Corporate Governance Committee, where she contributes to advancing governance standards nationally.

A Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a Member of Chief Executive Women, Melinda holds a Bachelor of Arts from Wellesley College and a Master of Business Administration from Harvard Business School.

# Executive Leadership

Thales Australia





## Jeff Connolly

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Originally from Melbourne, Jeff is a graduate of the University of Melbourne, is an Adjunct Professor at Swinburne University and Doctor of Engineering (hc) at University of Technology Sydney.



## Christine Baker

Chief Operating Officer,  
Acting Managing Director Australian Munitions

**Christine Baker is a highly accomplished executive with over 25 years of leadership experience in operations, supply chain, and commercial strategy across the energy and circular economy sectors. With a career that spans Australia, Singapore and the United Kingdom, she brings a powerful blend of global perspective, technical acumen, and visionary leadership.**

Prior to joining Thales Australia as Chief Operating Officer, Christine was General Manager of Sims Resource Renewal where she led the organisation through a significant period of innovation. She oversaw the development and delivery of a world-first Plasma Gasification pilot plant in Queensland and spearheaded commercial strategy development for US and European markets. Her leadership helped position the business at the forefront of converting hard-to-treat waste into high-value resources.

Prior to this, Christine spent over two decades at ExxonMobil, where she progressed through roles including process engineering, project management, and technical operations management at Altona Refinery in Melbourne. Progressing to more senior roles in Singapore with regional responsibilities across supply chain, logistics and operations management. Returning to Australia, she headed up ExxonMobil's ANZ downstream fuels business with full P&L responsibility

and the strategic transition of the Altona Refinery into a modern fuels import terminal.

Throughout her career, Christine has navigated complex restructures, driven multimillion-dollar operational outcomes, and forged lasting partnerships across government, regulators, and industry stakeholders.

Christine's leadership is defined by a steadfast commitment to safety, governance, and uniting teams around a shared vision to deliver results. Her deep sector knowledge and global leadership experience will be instrumental in shaping the company's strategic direction and long-term value creation for stakeholders and the communities it serves.

Christine holds degrees in Chemical Engineering and Science from the University of Sydney and has completed executive education at the Thunderbird School of Global Management and the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



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## John Best

### Chief Technical Officer Vice President Technical & Engineering

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**John Best joined ADI Limited in 2003. Initially responsible for the operations of Advanced Systems Pty Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary, he led the integration of this business into the wider ADI and its transformation into a centre for research and development.**

During this period he also directed ADI's bid to supply the Army with tactical unmanned aerial vehicles. In April 2005 John was appointed general manager strategy within the Electronic Systems business group. In this role his responsibilities included preparation of strategic business plans, analysis of business cases and acquisition opportunities and oversight of the research and development program, particularly working to improve its alignment with business objectives.

Following a brief period in the role of chief technologist, John was appointed vice president, Technology, Research and Development upon the formation of Thales Australia. In this role he has overall responsibility for the technical capability of the company, which

encompasses technical strategy, research and development, innovation, engineering process, engineering development and technical audits.

John joined ADI following a 15 year career with the Defence Science and Technology Organisation, during which he contributed to, and led, programs of work including underwater weapon effect modelling, mine warfare operations research, synthetic environments and naval combat systems. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree with First Class Honours in Physics from the University of Queensland, a PhD in Mathematics from the University of Wollongong and an MBA from the University of Adelaide.



## Sean Berry

### Vice President Communications

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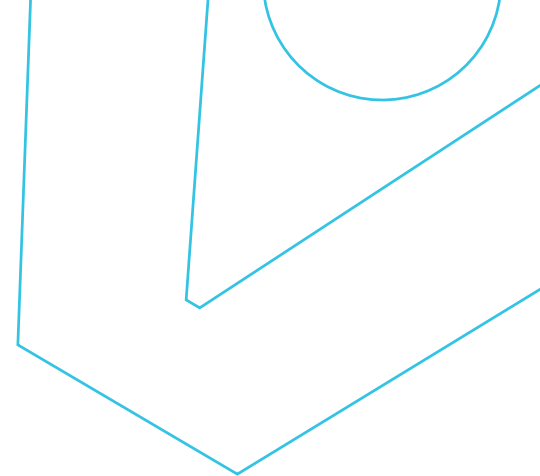
**Sean joined Thales Australia in 2025.**

He is responsible for the leadership of the communications function including internal and external communications, digital channels and design and events and engagement, as well as maintaining the company's brand and reputation in Australia.

After nearly two decades working in the media industry across both print and television news, Sean has worked in the government and professional service sectors.

He was the media director for the NSW premier and NSW Government from the start of the COVID crisis, and later worked as the Director of Strategy and then Chief of Staff to the NSW Treasurer and Minister for Energy.

Sean is committed to delivering positive outcomes through the pursuit of excellence and strategic planning. He has a keen interest in climate initiatives.





## Mitch O'Dwyer

### Vice President Strategy & Growth

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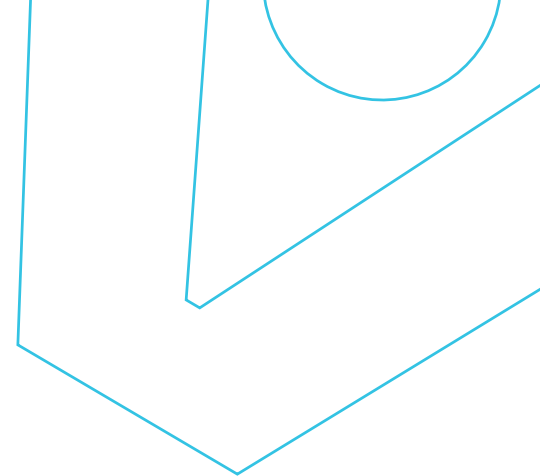
**Mitch joined Thales in 2024, bringing with him more than 20 years of industry, military, government and academic experience.**

Mitch has worked for a number of defence and national security companies in Australian and overseas, across a range of strategy, government relations and business development roles.

Mitch previously served as an officer in the Australian Army, completing operational deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as a range of domestic and overseas postings. He remains a member of the Australian Army Reserve.

Prior his military service, Mitch worked as an aide to a member of the Australian parliament and as a researcher at a major Australian think tank.

He holds bachelor's degrees in Commerce and Arts (Hons) from the University of Wollongong.





## Andrew Bartlett

### Vice President Above Water Systems

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**Andrew Bartlett joined Thales in 2025, bringing with him a wealth of experience transforming complex operations across Australia. His career spans senior management roles in Defence Infrastructure Services, Asset Management, Commercial Management, and Airline Engineering and Operations. Andrew is recognised for his strategic leadership and operational expertise.**

Before joining Thales, Andrew served as General Manager for Ventia's Defence Base Services contract, overseeing a diverse portfolio that included strategic asset management, facility management, customer operations, catering, and land and environmental management. During his five-year tenure, he led a major contract transformation programme that significantly enhanced both financial performance and service delivery. Under his leadership, Ventia was awarded SEG Defence Contractor of the Year, and Andrew was named Australian Industry Defence Network Executive of the Year in 2024.

Earlier in his career, Andrew spent more than 24 years in aviation, holding senior leadership positions across multiple operational domains. Notably, he led the Maintenance Operations and Control organisation within Qantas Airlines Engineering, where he was responsible for asset management, technical support, and fleet planning, playing a pivotal role in Qantas' transformation journey.

Andrew holds a Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering from the University of Technology Sydney and has completed formal qualifications in Six Sigma Black Belt (General Electric), Strategic Finance (Harvard Business School Australia), and the Company Directors Course (AICD).



# Andrew Downes

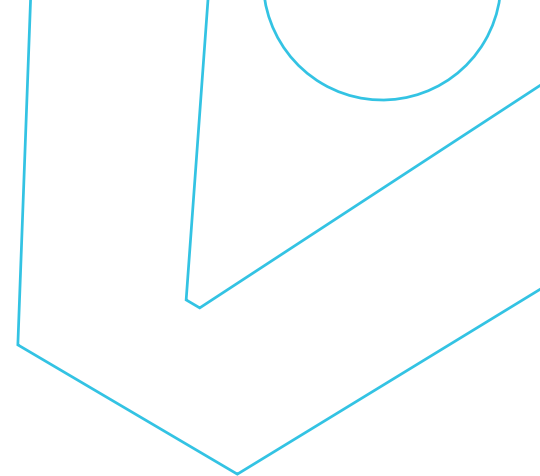
## Vice President Land

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**Andrew Downes is the Vice President of Land for Thales Australia. He joined Thales in 2023 and brings with him two decades of experience in both the Australian Defence Force and Government.**

Andrew is a former Chief of Staff to the Minister for Home Affairs and Cyber Security, as well as a senior staffer to former Prime Minister Julia Gillard AC. As an Officer in the Australian Army, he served in diverse appointments and operational deployments and qualified as one of the few foreign graduates of the United States Army Strategist program.

He holds qualifications in law, arts and economics from the University of Sydney and University of New South Wales.





# Troy Stephen

Vice President UWS, SIX and AVS

Currently, Troy Stephen is a Vice President at Thales Australia and New Zealand responsible for three businesses:

- **UWS** (Underwater Systems) - Supplying world-leading sonars to the Royal Australian Navy and allied Navies around the world for all platforms including submarines, surface vessels and helicopters as well as mine countermeasures systems.
- **SIX** (Secure Communications and Information Systems) - Supplying Defence with secure communications and resilient networks, intelligence and surveillance systems, command and control systems and information systems security solutions; and
- **AVS** (Avionics) - Supplying Defence with helicopter flight avionics and helmet-mounted display systems as well as training and simulation solutions for Airforce, Army and Navy.

Troy Stephen is a dynamic leader who brings more than 30 years' experience in the Defence Industry delivering solutions for the Australian Defence Force across a range of complex and challenging programmes.

Over his 20+ years at Thales, Troy has held a number of senior roles across the business including Vice President

of Underwater Systems between 2017 and 2023. Prior to that, he was the Director of Training and Simulation. Troy holds a Bachelor of Science (Computing) from UNSW School of Electrical Engineering and is certified by the International Project Management Association as a Level A Project Director.

Over the course of his career, Troy has developed a deep understanding of the importance of a strong and collaborative relationship between industry and the customer in order to guarantee success on complex projects. In 2007 Troy was awarded the Thales Defence Services & Aerospace Customer Commitment Award in recognition of the significant contribution that he has made in this area.

Troy is a strong advocate of employee engagement and an inclusive workplace. He was a member of Thales Australia's Diversity and Inclusion Council between 2016 and 2019. Troy is passionate about giving back to the community and has been an active volunteer Lifeguard with Surf Life Saving Australia since 2009.



## Sarah-Louise Donovan

### Vice President Health, Safety & Environment

**Sarah-Louise joined Thales in 2024 as General Manager, Safety & Wellbeing, bringing over 20 years of leadership expertise in safety, human performance, and risk management across aviation, military, transportation, and manufacturing sectors.**

Before joining Thales, Sarah-Louise served as a senior leader with Rio Tinto in the U.S., where she oversaw Process and Functional Safety for Copper operations in Utah. In this role, she drove critical initiatives to identify, assess, and control operational risks, preventing major and catastrophic process events. She also ensured compliance with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations by partnering with environmental, health, safety, and operations teams to achieve measurable improvements in safety and risk management.

Throughout her career, Sarah-Louise has held several senior and executive roles, including Head of HSEQ for Downer EDI's Rail and Transit Systems business and Group Manager, Operations Standards and Assurance for the Jetstar Group of airlines. In these roles, she successfully implemented strategic safety and assurance programs, cultivated high-performance

cultures, and delivered tangible improvements in organisational safety outcomes. Her career began with the Defence Science and Technology Organisation, where she led pioneering work in optimising human performance and human-machine interface design to enhance safety in operational environments.

A passionate advocate for innovation, Sarah-Louise is committed to upholding the highest safety standards across Thales Australia's diverse operations and driving sustainable performance improvements. She is equally dedicated to fostering employee engagement and is a champion for diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Sarah-Louise holds a Bachelor of Science (Psychology) from the University of Melbourne, a Master of Science and Technology (Aviation) from the University of New South Wales, and a PhD from Monash University, where her research applied Systems Thinking to examine safety leadership in high-risk operational environments.



## Ronán Carolan

### Vice President Human Resources

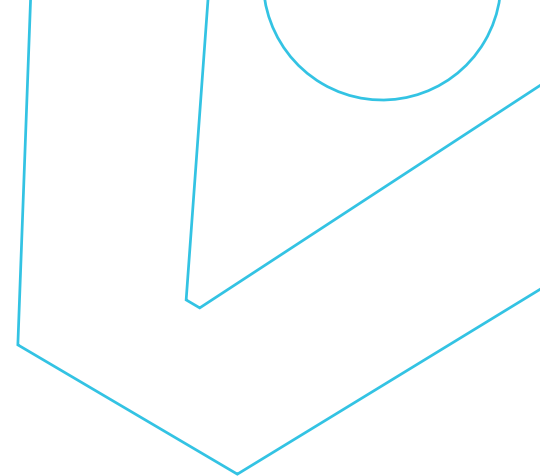
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**Ronán Carolan has been in the role of Vice President, Human Resources and a member of the Thales Australia Executive Leadership Team since joining Thales in May 2019.**

He is responsible for the development and implementation of the Thales Australia's HR strategy. Driving the HR strategic people plan focused on attracting, developing and retaining our most valuable asset, our employees, aligning with the Thales Towards 2023 strategy built around four strategic Axis - Grow, Protect, Deliver and Lead.

He has over 25 years of experience in Human Resources across multiple industries, including financial services, pharmaceutical/healthcare and telecommunications.

Ronán is a proven leader who thrives on empowering teams towards excellence through transforming culture. He has deep experience in developing and executing strategy in complex and challenging environments. Achieved by effectively partnering with business leaders to bring a pragmatic and commercial approach to solve people and business issues.





## James Couche

### Vice President Legal, Contracts & Compliance

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**In June 2017 James Couche was appointed Vice President of Legal & Contracts and Company Secretary, having joined Thales Australia as legal counsel in July 2008.**

He supports Thales Australia's finance and business objectives by providing strategic legal and commercial advice, and overseeing the compliance, legal and ethical undertakings of the company. James manages an internationally networked team of commercial, contract, trade compliance and legal professionals. The Legal & Contracts team is at the heart of the strategic and business decision-making processes for the group. In addition to his role as Vice President, James is the Chief Compliance Officer for Australia & New Zealand. James is an Executive Director of the Thales Australia Group of companies and Chairs the Thales Australia Ethics Committee, and is a member of HSE, Security and Compliance, Audit & Risk Board Committees.

Prior to joining Thales Australia, James was a solicitor with DLA Piper. James is a current holder of a NSW Legal Practising Certificate and has private practice experience across Litigation, Real Estate, Corporate and Commercial, Mining, Insurance and Government Contracting being first admitted to practice in 2006. His experience includes working closely with Government and non-Government stakeholders..

# THALES

Building a future we can all trust

7 Murray Rose Avenue,  
Sydney Olympic Park, NSW  
Australia

[thalesgroup.com](https://www.thalesgroup.com)

