

# The U.S.-U.K. Mutual Defense Agreement

## Cooperation on nuclear materials, technology, and information between close allies

The Mutual Defense Agreement (MDA) between the United States and the United Kingdom allows the two nations to exchange nuclear and other materials, equipment, and classified and controlled unclassified information for defense purposes. It is the most comprehensive such agreement that the United States has with any country.



The U.S.-U.K. MDA entered into force in 1958. It has been amended 10 times since then, including most recently in 2024. These amendments have broadened our bilateral cooperation. Information and material exchanges under the MDA support cooperation across three main missions: atomic weapons, nuclear threat reduction, and naval nuclear propulsion.

A 2024 amendment to the U.S.-U.K. MDA enables the United States and the United Kingdom to continue longstanding cooperation and enhances U.S. and U.K. technical capabilities to meet current and future threats. The amendment clarifies the levels and types of information eligible to be exchanged under the agreement, makes certain naval nuclear propulsion provisions reciprocal, and removes the 10-year sunset provision for physical transfers, thus making the agreement enduring in its entirety.

## Priorities for cooperation under the U.S.-U.K. MDA

**Atomic weapons:** support current and future atomic weapon systems in concert with our Department of Defense partners; cooperate to sustain, modernize, or reestablish experimental, modeling, design, engineering, and production capabilities, as well as nuclear material streams that underwrite the U.S. and U.K. deterrents; modernize physical and information technology infrastructure; and sustain and expand a specialized workforce.

**Nuclear threat reduction:** prevent proliferation of nuclear materials to non-state actors and advance collaborative capabilities to counter the threat of weapons of mass destruction terrorism worldwide.

**Naval nuclear propulsion:** share information, equipment, and nuclear material related to naval nuclear propulsion.

