

# Significant Cases of Global Arms Trade

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## Australia's Abrams-Tanks

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**Key Data:**

**Years:** 2022

**Involved Countries:** Australia USA

**Weapon Systems:** Abrams MBT

**Arms Producers:** General Dynamic Land Systems

**Perpetrators/Involved Parties:**

**Victims/Affected:**

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Australia's decision to allocate \$3.5 billion USD for the purchase of Abrams tanks from the United States has garnered both support and criticism. While some argue that this investment enhances Australia's military capabilities and aligns with strategic interests, others express concerns about the allocation of such a substantial budget to armored vehicles.

Critics of the purchase raise several points of contention:

- a) **Cost and Priorities:** The significant expenditure on tanks raises questions about resource allocation and priorities. Critics argue that allocating such a substantial amount of funds to military equipment, specifically tanks, could potentially divert resources from other pressing public sectors such as healthcare, education, infrastructure, and social welfare [1].
- b) **Utility and Relevance:** Some argue that investing in tanks, particularly the M1A2 Abrams, may not align with Australia's specific defense needs or future battlefield requirements. There are debates about the relevance and effectiveness of tanks in modern warfare, given the evolving nature of conflicts and the rise of asymmetric threats. Critics question whether the substantial investment in tanks is justified considering potential alternative defense capabilities [4].
- c) **Opportunity Costs:** Critics contend that the financial commitment to Abrams tanks could have been utilized in other defense areas that may be more relevant to Australia's strategic landscape, such as investing in emerging technologies, cyber defense capabilities, or naval assets. They argue that a diversified defense investment approach could provide a more comprehensive and future-oriented defense posture [1].

It is important to note that the decision to acquire Abrams tanks reflects Australia's strategic considerations and its assessment of national defense requirements. While there are criticisms regarding the allocation of resources, proponents argue that a robust armored capability contributes to national security and defense readiness. Ultimately, the evaluation of defense spending priorities involves weighing the potential benefits of acquiring advanced military equipment against other competing demands for public resources.

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## **Additional Information / Sources**

[1] "Jan 9, 2022 · Australia has locked in its purchase of more than 120 tanks and other armoured vehicles from the United States, at a cost of \$3.5 billion, as part of a major upgrade of the army's fleet."

URL: <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/australia-commits-to-3-5-billion-tank-purchase-from-the-us-20220109-p59mub.html>

[2] "Feb 17, 2022 · abc.net.au/news/us-general-charles-flynn-endorse-new-tanks/100838958. One of America's most senior generals is strongly backing Australia's decision to spend billions of dollars on new army ..."

URL: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-02-17/us-general-charles-flynn-endorse-new-tanks/100838958>

[3] "Jan 10, 2022 · Australia has agreed to a \$3.5 billion deal with the U.S. to acquire more than 120 tanks and other armored vehicles to upgrade its military fleet, The Sydney Morning Herald reported. Aust... Skip ..."

URL: <https://thehill.com/policy/international/asia-pacific/588951-australia-agrees-to-35-billion-tank-deal-with-us-report/>

[4] "Jun 22, 2021 · Australia, according to an unremarkable line item in the May federal budget, is making its first purchase of new tanks in almost 15 years with the upgrade of the army's M1 Abrams tank fleet. While the new purchase has ignited some debate about the utility of tanks for Australia's defence, it is also indicative of the wider ..."

URL: <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/australias-new-tanks-are-overkill-and-overweight/>

[5] "Jan 10, 2022 · The contract signing follows the US State Department's approval for Australia's purchase of additional Chinook helicopters and Abrams tanks from April 2021. M1A2 SEPv3, the latest variant of the combat-proven Abrams tank, features multiple upgrades to improve power generation, network compatibility, survivability and other vulnerability ..."

URL: <https://defbrief.com/2022/01/10/australia-signs-a3-5b-deal-for-new-abrams-tanks-other-armored-vehicles/>

[6] "Jan 10, 2022 · Australia will spend more than \$3.5 billion to purchase 120 tanks and other armoured vehicles from the United States. The upgrade could see the Australian Army gain up to 75 Abrams tanks, 29 ..."

URL: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10388087/Australia-spends-3-5-billion-purchase-120-tanks-United-States.html>

[7] "Jan 10, 2022 · Australia will modernize its land warfare capabilities under a roughly \$2.5-billion deal that will provide its army with 75 M1A2 SEPv3 Abrams tanks, together with armored support vehicles."

URL: <https://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/43820/australia-buys-m1a2-sepv3-advanced-abrams-tanks-to-lead-its-major-armor-upgrade>

[8] "Jan 9, 2022 · Australia committed to a A\$3.5 billion (\$2.5 billion) purchase of more than 120 tanks and other armored vehicles from the U.S. in a move to upgrade its fleet, the Sydney Morning Herald reports."

URL: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-01-09/australia-commits-to-a-3-5-billion-u-s-tank-purchase-smh-says>

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**Author**

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