

Friday, 1 June 2012

KEEPING SA AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE NATION'S DEFENCE

Techport Australia's reputation as the nation's premier naval shipbuilding hub has been further strengthened with a Government injection of **\$2 million**.

Premier Jay Weatherill said the money was allocated in yesterday's State Budget to ensure the state captured emerging naval shipbuilding opportunities and provided flexible access for companies, contractors and subcontractors.

The funding will go towards the expansion of the hub's Common User Facility which is scheduled to commence in late 2012 and conclude in mid 2013.

"The South Australian Government is serious about defence; it is a critical industry for this state and forms the foundation of our advanced manufacturing future which is a key priority," Mr Weatherill said.

"The South Australian Government has invested \$300 million in state-owned infrastructure at Techport Australia to develop a world-class maritime industrial precinct but we know we need to keep doing more to keep South Australia at the forefront of the nation's defence requirements.

"This announcement reinforces the State's long-term commitment to staged development of Techport Australia to support the needs of future naval shipbuilding programs, and attract additional third party users to the facility."

Defence Industries Minister Jack Snelling said the investment would extend site utilities and common infrastructure, including power, water, sewer, stormwater and communications, to development-ready land adjacent to the existing Common User Facility site.

"It ensures multiple naval programs - including a second shipbuilder - can be accommodated at Techport Australia and further positions the state to capture early Future Submarine opportunities, including the Land Based Test Site," he said.

"Techport Australia is currently home to the \$8 billion Air Warfare Destroyer project and the multi-billion dollar Collins Class submarine sustainment contract, and the confirmed consolidation site for the Future Submarine Project.

"The Future Submarine project will be transformational for the state's economy, providing enormous opportunities for local industry, and long term jobs for South Australians."

This comes on top of the \$2 million funding for the industry's peak association - the Defence Teaming Centre - announced in the Budget yesterday.