

News Release

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Minister for Economic Development
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Monday 15 February 2010

SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S NEW SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY IS BORN

Premier Mike Rann will this morning officially open the new Techport Australia facility at Osborne - which marks the birth of South Australia's 21st Century shipbuilding industry.

“This is the start of a new era in our State – with the opening of a defence precinct set up to build ships and submarines for the rest of this century,” Mr Rann said.

“It is the site from where \$8 billion worth of the Royal Australian Navy's new Air Warfare Destroyers will be produced and launched.

“It will also be where the 12 next-generation submarines – the largest conventional submarines of the type in the world – will be constructed.

“Techport Australia is a common user facility – a shipbuilding precinct uniquely built and owned by the State Government that can be used by any number of contractors and companies to build, service, repair and maintain ships and submarines.

“This precinct, incorporating the ASC's new facilities opened a few weeks ago by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, not only supports a whole new industry – it will support sustainable career paths for thousands of people for generations to come.

“The AWD project alone is estimated to deliver more than 3,000 direct and indirect jobs and an estimated \$1.4 billion to our State over the next 10 years.

“Techport Australia includes the largest shiplift in Australia capable of lifting a 9300-tonne vessel out of the water; a 230 metre long wharf designed to be lengthened if necessary; and a shipyard that has room to grow for future needs.

“This State Government made the decision to go in hard against other States for lucrative defence contracts. To demonstrate our credentials we put our money where our mouth was and built the infrastructure necessary to secure more of these projects.

“The investment of nearly \$400 million in this brand new common user facility has paid off.

“South Australia has secured about \$44 billion worth of defence projects which will be rolled out over the next two decades - which is about generating sustainable and meaningful jobs and careers.

“Techport Australia is tangible proof of our State's standing as the nation's defence hub.

“Techport has also attracted government and industry delegations from Spain, India, the UK and Germany – and today its opening has attracted one of the most powerful defence officials in the world – US the Deputy Secretary of Defence, Bill Lynn.

Mr Lynn will today fly in from Washington to be at today's opening. He is being accompanied by a delegation of US Assistant Deputy Secretaries of Defence and the US Ambassador to Australia, Jeffrey Bleich.

“The Air Warfare Destroyer, which involves a number of major US companies including Raytheon and Lockheed Martin, represents one of Australia's great nation-building projects.

“Last month Prime Minister Kevin Rudd described it as a project that ***“will demonstrate to the world our nation's technological and ship-building capabilities”***.”

“It will provide opportunities for a range of local industries, including building, materials suppliers, engineering, landscaping, security and cleaning contractors.

“This facility is a credit to all of the contractors and workers who have succeeded in bringing this complex project in on time and on budget.

“And thanks is also due in large part to the team at Defence SA, headed by Andrew Fletcher,” Mr Rann said.