

Minister Martin Hamilton-Smith

Minister for Defence Industries

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Spanish shipbuilding experts to join Air Warfare Destroyer project

The State Government has welcomed the announcement that Spanish shipbuilder Navantia will lead the shipbuilding component of the Air Warfare Destroyer project, after management structure reform.

Minister for Defence Industries Martin Hamilton-Smith said the Federal Government's decision to insert Spanish shipbuilding executives into the program is positive action that will ensure the Air Warfare Destroyer project continues to build momentum.

"Today marks another major milestone in the Air Warfare Destroyer program, the most complex shipbuilding project ever delivered in Australia.

"Project challenges caused by the traditional boom-bust nature of Australia's naval shipbuilding have been overcome, with significant productivity improvements now being realised from Ship 1 to Ships 2 and 3.

"These results are a testament to the skill and hard-work of ASC's workforce at Techport Australia, and the broader Air Warfare Destroyer Alliance team.

Spanish shipbuilder Navantia's expanded role in the program is a major step towards embedding international expertise into Australia's naval shipbuilding sector.

"Navantia bring over 300 years shipbuilding experience and will help develop our already strong local capability," Mr Hamilton-Smith said.

"A continuous build of ships and submarines should spearhead Australia's advanced manufacturing future, in line with Prime Minister Turnbull's \$1 billion science and innovation package announced yesterday.

"We must not repeat mistakes of the past and lose the knowledge and workforce that has been developed through the Air Warfare Destroyer program.

"The Federal Government must accelerate their continuous shipbuilding program to de-risk future programs.

"The Offshore Patrol Vessel project is the logical option providing an immediate opportunity for South Australian shipbuilders and would minimise the impact of the valley of death.

"Delivery of this project from Techport Australia will help set the larger, more complex Future Frigate program up for success.

"We have the infrastructure, workforce and industry base to successfully build Offshore Patrol Vessels, Frigates and the Future Submarines in South Australia – as part of a national shipbuilding enterprise with fleet basing and sustainment distributed across the nation."

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