

Premier Jay Weatherill

Saturday, 23 May, 2015

Air Warfare Destroyer launch shows strength of SA shipbuilding

Premier Jay Weatherill has paid tribute to the thousands of workers who contributed to the launch of the first Air Warfare Destroyer today.

The future destroyer *Hobart* was launched on the ship lift at Techport Australia – the \$300 million shipbuilding facility developed by the State Government to support the \$8 billion project.

Mr Weatherill also appealed to the Federal Government to entrust South Australian workers to build Australia's future submarines at Techport.

"We have the people and facilities to build ships and submarines here," he said.

"We can do it, we have proven that we can do it.

"I want to congratulate the thousands of workers who have been part of launching the *Hobart*."

During peak years, the AWD project directly supports 2100 jobs locally and a further 900 jobs Australia-wide. Another 1400 people work locally on the Collins submarine sustainment.

"Especially in times of conflict, it is important for Australia to maintain control of the maintenance of the nation's fleet," Mr Weatherill said.

"We need to ensure the Federal Government locks in a continuous build for naval shipbuilding."

South Australia's naval manufacturing industry, developed over the past 30 years, has resulted in the State amassing a high-end skills base and world-class capability.

"The State Government built Techport Australia to give South Australia the winning edge for the Air Warfare Destroyer build contract," he said.

"It has world class shipbuilding facilities, a dedicated supplier precinct and onsite Maritime Skills Centre.

"Our responsibility now is to help this important advanced manufacturing industry grow and thrive into the future.

"That includes not allowing the Federal Government to break its promise to build Australia's future submarines at Techport Australia."

The future ships *Hobart*, *Brisbane* and *Sydney* are the three future destroyers currently under assembly at Osborne.

The *Hobart*, the first on the production line, was launched and docked at Techport Australia's wharfing facilities in preparation for its internal fit out.

Sea trials are expected to commence in about 12 months.

Defence remains an important central pillar of the State's economy, employing 28,500 South Australians and contributing about \$2 billion to the economy annually.

The State Government's recently-released Defence Strategy 2025 lays out an ambitious vision to grow the industry to support 37,000 jobs (direct and indirect) and contribute \$2.5 billion annually to our economy in the next decade.