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Committee Secretariat
Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Email: fadt.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Secretariat,

Both the Defence Materials Technology Centre (DMTC, <http://dmtc.com.au/>) and the ARC Research Training Centre for Naval Design and Manufacturing (RTCNDM, <http://rtcndm.com.au/>) recognize the need for a PSE workforce in the defence industry equipped with research training to support major projects and facilitate translation of technology based discoveries. In the first 7 years of its existence DMTC has trained more than 20 post graduate qualified personnel in various PSE fields and both DMTC and RTCNDM plan to engage a minimum of 10 post graduate students in the next 3 years. Both initiatives operate in close collaboration between research providers industry and DST-Group to ensure the PSE needs appropriate to the current and future defence projects are addressed. In addition to the student output these initiatives also provide for the development of strong defence related PSE resources within the research providers.

The establishment and support of these initiatives demonstrates a commitment of government and defence to fulfil the need for ongoing development of PSE skills in the workforce. This is a prerequisite where new technology needs to be employed to meet capability and productivity requirements. The benefits of this has been demonstrated in several projects already completed by DMTC (for example developing and upskilling the supply chain to support BAE Systems' manufacture of Vertical Tail components for the Joint Strike Fighter).

It is believed that irrespective of any outsourcing it is essential to maintain high level PSE skills in Australia to ensure effective operation and through life support to defence platforms, with commensurate increases in cost effectiveness.

DMTC and RTCNDM provide a vehicle for the provision of PSE skills but there may be a case for expanding these efforts in the vocational area to avoid future skill shortages.

Further Information:
<http://www.dmtc.com.au>
<http://rtcndm.com.au>

Yours Faithfully

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