

SENATE INQUIRY INTO THE FUTURE OF AUSTRALIA'S NAVAL SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY

I would like to express my personal view and the view of the other 5000 plus people directly employed in the major ship yards around Australia.

During my 6 years working in the ship building industry at Henderson's Australian Marine Complex I have worked on several of the Armidale class patrol boats when they were getting built, I have worked on Hmas Sirius for 2 years installing the new RAS piping and deluge system when Tenix converted MV Delos from a commercial tanker into a navy spec Replenishment Vessel. I have worked on HMAS Westralia during its de commission before getting sold to Singapore for scrap. I have worked on the Anzac class frigate fleet doing all types maintenance tasks and engineering changes, I am currently employed by BAE Systems at Henderson working on the 4th Anzac class frigate undergoing the Anti ship missile defence upgrade. All the experience I have gained working on our current Navy fleet has made me the tradesman I am today, and to this day my skills are still growing and hopefully one day I would like to pass my skills onto my kids if they wish to follow me into the niche industry that is Ship Building.

The DMO needs to look at how their planning, tendering and procurement processes are failing to bring forward naval acquisitions to replace our aging fleet and secure the future capacity as a ship building nation.

We want the DMO to invest our money into the Australian ship building industry to get the sophisticated, high quality equipment our service men and women deserve and at the same time ensuring our vital industry is saved from extinction. I would like to see our Government fulfil their pre - election commitments to our industry, I want the Australian industry have the chance to bid for the work that is set out in the 2014/2015 Defence White paper. Australian ship yards have the capacity and the shipbuilders have the skills to undertake the naval projects that we are awarded and to the high standard the Commonwealth insists.

The replacement for HMAS Success and HMAS Sirius need to be designed and built here in Australia and the condition of success should not be used as an excuse to off shore that work to save a few million dollars. The replacement of the deteriorating Armidale class patrol boats needs to be made out of steel and be put out for Australian tender as soon as we have the funding otherwise we won't have the level of border security that our Island nation constantly requires.

The next generation frigates and submarines need be completely designed and built here to stop problems with off the shelf designs not suited to our conditions or built not being built to Australian standards.

- **If we design and build all our own ships here we will own that intellectual property,**
- **We will be investing in our Australia's own manufacturing industry,**
- **We will be investing in the skills of current and future shipbuilders,**
- **We will be securing the skill and capacity around the countries yards to maintain our fleet when you need it.**

We now have the chance to strengthen our national security and industries future by insisting we complete this work here on Australian soil. We all know Australian ship builders cost more than overseas ship builders but the money we spend here on our surface ships or subs doesn't just stop at the ship yards gate but it flows onto the yards suppliers and contractors and into local communities all around the country. The Defence White paper and must deal with the peaks and troughs that have traditionally occurred that impact our industry. The White paper must once and for all schedule our Navies requirements with a consistent planning cycle and rolling build with consideration of the Australian ship yards.

A rolling build of replacement vessels and new acquisition will maintain and deliver skills, productivity, knowledge and capacity, and provide certainty for the Industries Defence contractors.

If this does not happen, instead of us working and paying tax we will be on welfare costing the government money, we won't be buying new houses for our families, new cars or food from the shops.

The social and economic effects are huge if we lose the Australian ship building industry.

So In closing you should address the current Industry situation with the LHD and AWD projects wind down by bringing forward acquisitions to avoid the valley of death and maintain our skills and workforces. We need a rolling build and acquisition of all other future builds. The 2015 Defence White Paper needs to recognise that we need to give certainty to our defence contractors, and that peaks and trough cycle that have traditionally occurred have adverse effects on Australian industry and Australians jobs.

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