



**Stephen Smith MP**  
Minister for Defence

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Minister for Defence Materiel

## **Air Warfare Destroyer update**

Minister for Defence Stephen Smith and Minister for Defence Materiel Jason Clare today provided an update on the \$8 billion Air Warfare Destroyer (AWD) project.

Australia is constructing three AWDs based on a proven design from the Spanish Navy. When complete, the AWD will be one of the most capable warships of its size in the world.

The Government and Defence have been actively working with Defence Industry and the AWD Alliance, which is managing the AWD project, to deliver the project. The AWD Alliance consists of ASC, the Defence Materiel Organisation (DMO) and Raytheon.

Construction of the AWDs involves the fabrication of 90 separate steel blocks, 30 for each ship, as well as three additional sonar blocks at a number of shipyards in Australia and overseas.

These blocks will be brought together by ASC at the South Australian Government's Common User Facility in Adelaide where the ships are being assembled.

Across Australia 2,100 workers are currently working directly on the AWD project with that number expected to increase to 2,400 at the peak of the project next year.

All blocks for the first AWD, HMAS *Hobart*, are now under construction with some in advanced fit-out, and work has also commenced on 11 blocks for the second ship, HMAS *Brisbane*.

In May, Mr Smith and Mr Clare announced the reallocation of the construction of up to 18 blocks to assist the project's schedule. The AWD Alliance has now finalised the reallocation of these blocks:

- Forgacs (Newcastle) – four blocks;
- BAE Systems (Melbourne) – two blocks;
- ASC (Adelaide) – seven blocks; and
- Navantia (Spain) – five blocks.

This reallocation is expected to reduce forecast delays to the completion of the project by up to 12 months.

The AWD project has achieved a number of important milestones this year. They include:

- New Blast and Paint facilities were commissioned at ASC and Forgacs;
- Forgacs expanded into a second Newcastle region shipyard;
- Most of the AWD Foreign Military Sales-sourced equipment for HMAS *Hobart* has been transported to Australia and received at the shipyard;
- Three shipsets of the Mk 45 gun mounts were delivered in July;
- Six Mk 25 Typhoon guns arrived in August – two for each ship;
- The first two shipsets of the Australian Tactical Interface were delivered in September;
- Vertical Launch System modules for HMAS *Hobart* have been delivered;
- Four of six planned builds of AWD Aegis software have been completed, representing approximately 98% of the AWD Aegis software adaptation effort by lines of code;
- Successful testing was conducted on how the Aegis combat system and Australian Tactical Interface work together;
- Work has begun on the sustainment strategy for the ships including the recruitment of staff and development of a sustainment plan;
- AWD's internal communications equipment contract worth approximately \$37 million was signed with Navantia's divisional company, FABA Systems.; and
- All 17 contracts for the procurement of the Combat System have now been implemented.

In 2012 and 2013, the amount of work and the number of workers on this project is expected to increase:

- 36 more blocks are due to be constructed and delivered to ASC;
- The keel blocks of HMAS *Hobart* and the second ship HMAS *Brisbane* will be laid on the building berth in preparation for consolidation;
- Hull integration for HMAS *Hobart* begins next year and will be completed in 2013;
- Work will begin on the construction of blocks for the third ship, HMAS *Sydney*;
- Combat System Software will be formally delivered and demonstrated in early 2012;
- Gun weapons systems and radar will be received; and
- Trials crew training commences in 2013.