

Premier Jay Weatherill

Minister Martin Hamilton-Smith

Minister for Defence Industries

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Defence White Paper a win for South Australia

Premier Jay Weatherill said today's release of the 2016 Defence White Paper is a win for South Australia.

"I commend the Federal Government's long term, significant investment in Australia's Defence Forces and recognition of industry as a fundamental defence capability," Mr Weatherill said.

"The White Paper outlines a raft of opportunities for South Australia including the Commonwealth's commitment to a continuous build of 12 submarines - which we have fought long and hard.

"It's a win for workers, families, businesses and an entire industry sector and it's also a win for Australia.

"Eighteen months ago, the Federal Government was talking about defence procurement in terms of short-term value for money decisions.

"The defence of our country is now recognised as being more than Army, Navy and Air Force – it now has a fourth partner in Australian defence industry.

"This fundamental shift has come after a prolonged campaign by the South Australian Government, unions- representing shipyard workers and industry through the defence teaming Centre and its Australian Made Defence campaign.

"This is what happens when you stand up for South Australia."

Defence Industries Minister Martin Hamilton-Smith said while the good news is a fundamental shift in procurement strategy, there are still a few unanswered questions.

"We are yet to see a commitment to build the full submarine fleet in Australia, centred at Techport in South Australia," Mr Hamilton-Smith said.

"The White Paper re-confirmed the future frigate fleet will be built in South Australia, with a continuous build of 9 anti-submarine warfare vessels. It also committed to a continuous build of minor warships, starting with 12 Offshore Patrol Vessels, however it remained silent on build location.

"While re-confirmation that future frigates will be built in Adelaide is great news for South Australia, it doesn't address the immediate challenge facing our local shipbuilding industry.

"The valley-of-death is real. Hundreds of shipbuilding workers have lost their jobs and there are more to come," Mr Hamilton-Smith said.

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Other key investment decisions in the 2016 Defence White Paper for South Australia include:

- Increase from eight to 15 P8 aircraft, which will be based at RAAF Base Edinburgh
- Confirmation the government will acquire 7 high altitude Triton unmanned aircraft, which will likely be based at RAAF Base Edinburgh
- \$1-\$2 billion investment in enhancing the Jindalee Operational Radar Network, which is centred from RAAF Base Edinburgh.
- \$500 - \$750m redevelopment of the Woomera Range, based in the state's north west
- \$1-\$2bn investment to convert the interim Distributed Ground Station based in Edinburgh Defence Precinct into permanent facilities
- \$1-2 billion deployable air defence system, to replace the existing capability at Army's Woodside base

Premier Weatherill said the State Government looks forward to partnering with Defence, industry and academia to successfully deliver the capability challenges facing Australia's Defence Forces, and the innovation needed for next-generation technologies.