



THE HON. GREG COMBET AM MP
Minister for Defence Materiel and Science

SHARON GRIERSON MP
Federal Member for Newcastle

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AIR WARFARE DESTROYER PROJECT BENEFITING NEWCASTLE

Greg Combet, Minister for Defence Materiel and Science and Sharon Grierson MP, Member for Newcastle announced today that full production of the Australia's three Hobart Class Air Warfare Destroyers is now underway including at the Forgacs Shipyard in Newcastle.

Minister Combet said production was now underway at three shipyards across Australia: at Forgacs in Newcastle, at BAE in Melbourne and ASC in Adelaide.

"This is an important milestone for this national project and for the people of Newcastle and Forgacs should be congratulated on winning work on the Air Warfare Destroyer project," Mr Combet said.

"The AWD Alliance will fabricate 31 blocks for each ship at three shipyards: nine blocks at ASC in Adelaide, 12 blocks at BAE Systems in Melbourne and ten blocks at Forgacs in Newcastle. Forgacs is fabricating the blocks in the aft superstructure of the warships."

"In preparing to build 27 of the blocks that will form the air warfare destroyers Forgacs is upgrading its shipyard including development of blast and paint facilities, warehousing and onsite cranes.

"Currently Forgacs is building three superstructure blocks with a total length of 36 metres and weighing more than 200 tonnes."

"Across Australia, more than 500 people are now working on building hull blocks for the AWDs and this will grow to a total workforce in the three shipyards of more than 1,000 people." Mr Combet said.

"This is a significant boost for Newcastle's economy with flow on benefits continuing for many years," said Sharon Grierson MP, the Federal Member for Newcastle.

"Forgacs already has 75 production workers involved in the project with that number rising to 140 during the life of the project. Importantly, there are already 23 apprentices involved with another 17 to be recruited underlining the contribution Forgacs and the Rudd Government is making to developing national skills."

Media contacts:

Defence Media Liaison: 02 6265 3343 or 0408 498 664