



Keel Laying Ceremony – AWD Ship 1

SPEECH NOTES FOR MANAGING DIRECTOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER STEVE LUDLAM

6 September 2012

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen...

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all here to the ASC Shipyard to mark the keel laying for Ship 1, the future *HMAS* Hobart.

At ASC, we maintain the Collins Class fleet of submarines and we are the lead shipbuilder for the construction of the three Hobart Class air warfare destroyers.

I have the privilege to lead more than 2,300 permanent employees across three sites – our submarine maintenance facility, a few hundred metres further along the road here; this modern, world-class shipyard; and another submarine support facility in WA.

We are a major employer in the national shipbuilding industry and proud to be so.

A keel laying ceremony is an important tradition for any shipyard but today's ceremony is a special milestone for ASC, as it is the first keel laying ceremony for this shipyard.

It is naval tradition that every ship constructed for service be honoured on four historical ceremonial occasions, being: the keel laying; the



christening (or launching); the commissioning; and, the decommissioning.

Today's ceremony, the keel laying, marks the construction phase of the vessel.

The keel laying ceremony is still an important part of boat construction, even though the majority of ships today are created using a modular construction that does not include a traditional keel.

The ceremony has traditionally invited good luck in the construction process of the ship and continued good luck throughout the life of the vessel.

Always at the forefront of our minds are the naval men and women who will serve on the vessel in years to come.

As you will shortly witness, a commemorative coin will be placed into the area of the keel as an offering of good fortune for the vessel.

Significantly, this will be performed by the youngest male and female apprentices in the shipyard – Rhys Price and Dominique Guzdek. Again, this respects the fact that the youngest shipwright in the yard would have been an integral part of the ceremony in days gone by.

Rhys Price is a first year apprentice in the trade of boilermaking and Dominique Guzdek is a first year apprentice in the electrical trade. I am also proud to say that both are second generation ASC production employees. Rhys' father, Dave, works at ASC North on the submarines and Dominique's father, Paul, here at ASC South. I welcome them both here today.



I am proud to say we are one of the largest employers of apprentices in South Australia. These young men and women are part of a dedicated group focused on building Australia's frontline naval capability.

They are the future of national shipbuilding and it is therefore fitting that they will play an integral part in the ceremony today.

We equally value the many senior personnel in this shipyard who, every day, share their vast knowledge and experience with their younger colleagues.

A project such as this generates real skills for real people, people who can achieve the seemingly impossible. It will sustain an industry that is focussed on building Australia's shipbuilding capability, and ensuring our national security.

The defence industry sector is competing to secure the best talent to work on projects such as this, and it is critical that we keep these talented people challenged, and provide opportunities for a future in this industry.

The people on this project work hard and, as I'm sure you can appreciate, a project of this size and scope does not offer many moments to down tools, take a step back and reflect - both on what has been achieved, and what still lies ahead of us.

Indeed, what has already been achieved on this project - and on this site - is quite remarkable if you consider that this shipyard was only officially opened at the beginning of 2010.



It is the most modern shipyard in Australia – incorporating the latest production design features currently utilised in international naval build programs

However, without the knowledge and experience that come with the people that you will find here, a shipyard is just a collection of cranes, tools and machinery.

Instead, we see Australian industry and Australian employees driving every element of this project. It draws on resources from right across the nation – from iron ore in the west, to fabrication in Tasmania, New South Wales, Victoria and of course, here in South Australia.

In a time when manufacturing is struggling, our role at the heart of naval manufacturing on projects such as this is a good news story.

The AWD project is building a truly national platform for the future of naval shipbuilding in Australia - through creating a sustainable capability; and establishing the resources, expertise and skill-base that can accomplish an incredibly complex task.

I would like to specifically acknowledge the other two shipyards where significant work has been undertaken on the AWDs – Forgacs in Newcastle, New South Wales; and BAE in Williamstown, Victoria.

In closing, I would like to thank the Commonwealth Government for its foresight in establishing the AWD program here, as well as ASC's Alliance partners in the project, DMO and Raytheon.



I would also like to thank the South Australian Government for its continued support and investment in building and supporting a maritime precinct of which Australia can be proud.

I would now like to introduce the CEO of the AWD Alliance, Mr Rod Equid...