



# **Official Opening of ASC Shipyard**

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**SPEECH BY ASC CHAIRMAN VICE ADMIRAL CHRIS**

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First of all, I'd like to thank the Prime Minister and Premier of South for speaking today at what is truly a defining moment in the history of ASC.

Today's official opening of the shipyard marks a new era for ASC as we continue to forge a path at the frontline of Australia's naval shipbuilding industry.

However, it is also a significant event for our partners in the AWD Alliance, the Defence Materiel Organisation and Raytheon Australia and for our eventual customer the RAN.

I thank all of them for their cooperation and support as I also thank AWD designer Navantia and the USN and our capability partner Bath Iron Works for their unswerving support from the very earliest days of the project.

I note too the unstinting support of the SA Government who were key players in bringing AWD to this site.

On a personal note, I have had a close association with the Air Warfare Destroyer Program since my time as Chief of Navy, then as Chairman of the AWD Alliance Principals Council and now as Chairman of ASC.

So it is an extremely rewarding day for me to see the shipyard officially opened and to be able to get down to the most satisfying end of the business, building the ships.

The shipyard is ASC's biggest infrastructure program since the establishment of the Collins class submarine facility next door in 1989, and it is Australia's most modern shipbuilding facility. It is a \$120 million investment in Australia's naval future which incorporates the latest production design features currently utilised in international naval build programs.

Looking around at the calm now, it's hard to imagine the storm of activity that will soon take place on this site. ASC knows that the spotlight is on us, in more ways than one perhaps, but particularly today, here, as we ramp up the build phase of the program, it is time for the company to stand and deliver.

ASC has successfully risen to such challenges in the past— having built and delivered the Collins Class submarines for the Royal Australian Navy.



With the assistance of our Alliance partners we will do so again with the AWD in order to re-affirm our position at the forefront of naval shipbuilding in Australia.

The company is in the process of renewal so as to meet the demands of our owners, the Federal Government, and our customers in Defence. Leading that renewal will be our new Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, Mr Steve Ludlam, here today in his first week at the helm.

Steve has an exciting and exacting task ahead of him but he has some solid foundations to build on. More than two decades of experience with the build and maintenance of the Collins Class submarines has taught ASC some valuable lessons – lessons which have been taken on board.

ASC has large-scale project experience, you see before you world-class facilities and we are fortunate to have a highly skilled team of staff. One of ASC's greatest strengths is our people and it is their experience, tireless efforts and enthusiasm, which will help ASC achieve one of the most complex engineering programs ever undertaken in this country

Already we're in the process of building a great team here at ASC and I would like to publicly acknowledge the contribution of staff, both here at our facility and the AWD Systems centre.

At the height of AWD construction in the first quarter of 2012, ASC is expected to employ more than 800 people in its shipbuilding operations out of an Alliance total of about 1900 in direct support of AWD. Of course the project will create many more jobs in supporting industries.

In listing our strengths I would also add that ASC knows the national importance of the business we are in. As such we are committed to working cooperatively with the Commonwealth to support outcomes in a climate where there is an emphasis on value for money and the strengthening the foundations of Australia's defence.

The AWD Program itself has already passed a number of key milestones since the contract was signed in October 2007.

Two major reviews - the Preliminary Design Review (PDR) and Critical Design Review (CDR) - have both been achieved. The Alliance is making massive strides in the combat systems area, and contracts have been signed for most of the ship's equipment and with our block subcontractors.

Although it's still early days, it certainly is a promising start to achieving the Commonwealth's outcomes.

Finally I would thank AWD Alliance CEO and CEO of ASC Shipbuilding John Gallacher and his staff for their drive and determination in bringing this facility to fruition on time, on budget.



So I thank you again for your support in being here today to share the exciting next step in ASC's journey.

This official opening of the ASC shipyard signifies that we are ready to get on with the task ahead of building the Air Warfare Destroyers and I look forward to 2014 when we celebrate the official launch of HMAS *Hobart*.

I'd now be honoured if the Prime Minister would join me on stage for the official opening ceremony.