

Wednesday 18 April, 2018

Australian trade unions reach landmark Principles Agreement with BAE Systems Australia

The Principles Agreement signed today signals the intent of unions and BAE Systems Australia to work together to ensure, if BAE Systems' bid is successful, that the Future Frigate SEA 5000 project will not only produce the best possible product for the Australian Navy, but will also revitalize manufacturing, build Australia's sovereign shipbuilding capability and secure highly skilled jobs for the future.

The SEA 5000 Future Frigates program is a key pillar in the Government's ambition to create a Continuous Naval Shipbuilding industry. It is a once in a generation program that represents a fantastic opportunity for the Australian manufacturing industry. Its significance cannot be overstated, and will provide hundreds of new opportunities for shipbuilding, manufacturing and across the broader supply chain. This Agreement supports the development of a highly skilled, flexible workforce with access to ongoing training and skills acquisition.

The commitments within this agreement to a genuine cooperative approach between BAE Systems, its workforce and their representatives demonstrates the mutual respect that has grown between BAE Systems Australia and Shipbuilding Unions. The Agreement will underpin a competitive and positive workplace relations environment that will support successful delivery of the ships.

Signatories to the agreement include – BAE Systems Australia, AMWU, AWU, ETU, Professionals Australian and the ACTU.

Quotes attributable to Gabby Costigan, Chief Executive Officer, BAE Systems Australia

"BAE Systems Australia welcomes the signing of this Principles Agreement with the Australian shipbuilding unions. This Agreement is a further demonstration of the mutual respect and cooperation developed throughout a number of major programs including the building of ANZAC class frigates, the New Zealand frigates HMSNZ Otago and Wellington, the on time delivery of the Landing Helicopter Dock Ships and the construction of blocks for the Air Warfare Destroyer program.

BAE Systems is proposing its Global Combat Ship – Australia for the Federal Government's SEA 5000 program. Based in South Australia the project will employ many thousands of highly skilled people from across the nation, including 1000 graduates and apprentices during the 30+ year program to build nine Anti-Submarine Warships for the Royal Australian Navy.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Assistant Secretary Scott Connolly:

“The Frigate program is critical to Australia’s national security, and the security of thousands of Australians jobs.

“This project has huge potential to create jobs and build capacity right across the shipbuilding industry and its related manufacturing supply chains.

“The ACTU hopes that this agreement signals the continuation of a constructive relationship between BAE Systems, its workforce and the shipbuilding unions.”

Quotes attributable to AMWU Assistant National Secretary Glenn Thompson:

“This agreement is another milestone in our campaign for an Australian shipbuilding industry that delivers good jobs and meets Australia’s future needs. Thousands of shipbuilding workers have campaigned to secure the future of this industry.”

“We look forward to working with BAE Systems to build a workforce that has the skills to deliver this critical project.”

Quotes attributable to CEPU

“Today’s agreement represents the beginning of a productive partnership between working people and a major employer in the defence construction industry.”

“It is evidence for all industry participants in the manufacturing, construction and infrastructure sectors that a co-operative working relationship with unions is in the best interests of working people, business and the nation.”

Quotes attributable to AWU

“The AWU looks forward to working constructively with BAE Systems and our fellow unions to deliver a successful project that generates quality employment now and into the future.”

Quotes attributable to Professionals Australia

“Australia is in dire need of major projects which generate good, steady jobs for engineers and other workers in the shipbuilding industry.”

“This is the most important and complex project in Australia, providing an enormous opportunity to fast track our move into advanced manufacturing and create the smart jobs of the future through.”

“That opportunity will only be seized if we do the vast majority of work locally in Australia to get the flow on benefit to Australian workers through direct jobs in the supply chain.”

ENDS

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BAE Systems Australia

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Australian Council of Trade Unions



Shipbuilding unions

