

Media information

ASC's AWD apprentices come on board

Wednesday, 11 February 2009

Ten young South Australians have been given the employment opportunity of a lifetime after being selected as ASC's first apprentices for the Air Warfare Destroyer (AWD) Program.

The 10 represent the first intake in the AWD Apprentice Development Program, jointly run by ASC and the Engineering Employers Association Group Training Scheme (EEAGTS), and officially launched today at the Maritime Skills Centre at Osborne.

Under the scheme, 10 apprentices employed by EEAGTS will start their apprenticeship with third-party 'host' companies while ASC finishes upgrading its Osborne shipyard for AWD construction to begin later this year.

ASC will remain in contact with the apprentices while they are with their host companies, including hosting orientation visits of its shipyard.

Once AWD work is available and the apprentices have obtained the high level of skills needed, ASC will act as their EEAGTS host company for the remainder of their apprenticeship.

"These apprentices are an investment in our future," General Manager – ASC Shipbuilding Robert Lemonius said.

"The AWDs will be the most complex warships ever built in Australia, and the Apprentice Development Program is another major step in our efforts to grow the highly-skilled workforce we will need in our role as AWD shipbuilder.

"We are delighted to join forces with EEAGTS to give young South Australians the opportunity to work on such an important project."

EEAGTS General Manager Sue Frazer said that the initiative is the result of long term planning for the future workforce in South Australia.

"This innovative program has resulted in EEAGTS selecting high calibre apprentices to be placed in participating host companies whilst maintaining contact with and commitment to the AWD project," she said.

"By giving the AWD apprentices exposure to the wider engineering industry, they will have the opportunity to learn skills that will be able to be directly transferred to the AWD project. This provides the engineering industry sector the chance to help develop South Australia's future workforce."



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Continued from Page 1

ASC is a partner in the AWD Alliance, the body responsible for delivering the AWDs to the Royal Australian Navy.

ASC's existing workforce of approximately 1,400 will expand to more than 2,000 for the AWD Program.

AWD Apprentice Development Program:

- Leading Australian defence company ASC is preparing its workforce to build the Hobart Class air warfare destroyers (AWD).
- The AWD Apprentice Program is a joint initiative between ASC and the Engineers Employers Association Group Training Scheme (EEAGTS).
- 10 EEAGTS apprentices (8 fabrication, 2 electrical) will join the program this year and a further 10 in 2010.
- The apprentices will initially be based with local 'host' companies who have agreed to participate in this innovative program to develop their skills.
- The apprentices can join ASC once its Osborne shipyard is complete and they have the necessary skills.

ASC (formerly Australian Submarine Corporation) is the nation's last remaining Australian-owned prime defence contractor. The company designed and constructed the Collins Class submarines and today delivers design, upgrade and maintenance services for the submarines' through-life. In May 2005, ASC was selected to build Australia's next generation warships – the Hobart Class air warfare destroyers. ASC employs over 1,400 personnel in South Australia and Western Australia, including 280 engineering and technical specialists. The Federal government has stated that it plans to return ASC to private ownership.

*The **Engineering Employers Association Group Training Scheme (EEAGTS)** has been in operation since 1981 and currently has 210 apprentices placed in various host companies in the manufacturing and engineering sector in South Australia. EEAGTS and ASC have a long history of close collaboration due to EEAGTS's involvement as a provider of apprentices for ASC's Collins Class submarine program.*

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