

Submission 50 - Mr Jon Primrose

Mr Jon Primrose made submission 16 to the inquiry into the Future of Australia's naval shipbuilding industry in the 44th Parliament.

This document is intended as a supplementary submission to the original submission 16.

All submissions received in the 44th Parliament can be accessed via the following link:

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Economics/Naval_shipbuilding/Submissions

The future sustainability of Australia's strategically vital naval shipbuilding industry.

This submission is my personal view of what direction the future of Australian Naval shipbuilding industry should be heading to ensure we still have the capacity and labour to undertake this vital work.

I am a Boilermaker welder by trade, I had the privilege of doing my apprenticeship in a small family run engineering workshop whose core business was working on a wide range of Naval and commercial vessels. I finished my trade in 2007 and due to a down turn i left the Shipbuilding industry, In 2012 I was recruited to start work at BAE Systems in Henderson to undertake the current ASMD upgrade of the ANZAC class frigates. Over the last year we have seen 130+ highly skilled workers be made redundant as the ASMD project comes to an end. Many young workers who got their start in the industry have now left, they may come back to the industry if all the stars align but the loss of these shipbuilder's skill sets is very worrying.

Development of contracts relating to naval ship and submarine building;

All parties involved in Building, Designing and Maintaining our current and future fleets need to communicate and work together to focus on getting rid of the valley of death where our vital skills and capacity gets lost. We need tri partisan support from governments, industry and unions to put a plan in place for the next 20+ years of contracts instead of just deciding on a new replacement or upgrade at the last minute, history has shown this method costs millions to up skill workers and is a very risky method.

Design, management and implementation of naval shipbuilding and submarine defence procurement projects in Australia;

As these ships are for our Royal Australian Navy I think they should have a lot of input into what they require for operational needs, but they should be very prompt with their decisions to avoid delays or peaks and troughs as lead times for procurement is very high in our industry. Management should be partnerships with the commonwealth and the shipbuilding company itself to avoid any miss management of projects due to lack of clarity and direction.

Utilization of local content and supply chains;

All our Naval acquisition contracts should have a maximum level of Australian made content and as close to 100% Australian labour content , Over this coming decades our government has a real opportunity to create a world class shipbuilding industry that will inject billions of dollars into our economy. We need to ensure we get maximum industry and social benefit here in Australia from these contracts,

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Integration of offshore design work and supply chains in Australia;

I am aware our government likes to select proven designs from overseas companies; I feel this just shows again our lack of foresight as a country. If we had thought about needing more ships build 10 to 15 years ago we could have trained up naval architects, so the future fleet of naval vessel could have all been our own design. Like many other countries they design their own ships and then they also create an export market of the back of that. If we are to use foreign equipment in our naval vessels we will need to ensure we own the IP of that equipment in case of political unrest. Otherwise we would be stuck with billions of dollar worth of broken Vessels that the designer or manufacture won't release the parts to fix.

Opportunities for flow on benefits to local jobs and the economy;

90 Billion dollars worth of vessels to be built here in Australia will grow our industry into something to be proud of as a shipbuilder, thousands of workers will be working across the nation in the 20 + ship yards working , earning a good living , spending money in the local communities and paying taxes to help support social and economic growth.

Apprentices will start in a career and to be learning the skills to take over from the older generation of shipbuilders, If our government puts a plan forward for rolling build they could stay in the industry for the rest of their working lives.

JON PRIMROSE

PROUD AUSTRALIAN SHIPBUILDER