



5th September 2006

Ms Kathleen Dermody
Secretary
Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee
Suite SG.57
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms Dermody

Subject: Inquiry into Naval Shipbuilding in Australia

We have recently become aware of the above inquiry and have read some of the submissions to date.

As a 2,500 tonne repair facility based in Brisbane on over 30,000 sqm it is of concern to us that we have not been brought to the attention of the committee, or mentioned in any of the submissions we have read.

The Queensland Government submission identifies the existing infrastructure of the Forgas Cairncross dockyard and the potential development of a common user facility (CUF) with Viking Industries at Hemmant. They have identified the aim of the facility as follows (sic)

“This facility will provide the necessary infrastructure for the complete assembly of large ship modules, within 6 km of the Cairncross dry-dock. It is also suitable for fabrication of modules for the AWD that would then be transported to South Australia. The planned infrastructure developments for the CUF are:

- Heavy lift barge access to Brisbane River for up to 1000 tonne modules
- Hard stand lay down area for up to 1000 tonne modular assemblies
- Undercover facilities with suitable overhead crane capacity
- Electrical services, water reticulation, communication services and drainage collection
- Suitable project management facilities”

While we would encourage this development if it contributes to the sustainable capabilities of the industry in Australia, we are proud to point out that our facility has the majority of these capabilities already in place.

The industry in which we survive, is primarily focused on commercial craft with some exposure to pleasure boats and State Government vessels. Due to fluxuating customer demand, it can be very difficult to maintain and develop skilled staff. This makes potential navy work very important to existing infrastructure like ours, as it provides an opportunity to develop industry skills and knowledge in a positive, productive way.

Our skill base and location next door to Cairncross Drydock would seem to make us ideal participants in any major ship building project. Any fabrication work undertaken could be taken directly to the drydock without the need to ship it via the river. This could save considerable sums depending on how the project was to proceed.



Figure 1 - Aerial as shown in Queensland Gov submission (Brisbane Slipways facility circled)

We have a strong potential to contribute to the upcoming needs of the Government and we felt it was important to bring this to the Senate's attention, in calculating our country's capacity and productivity.

A better understanding of Brisbane Slipways facilities can be viewed at www.bse.net.au . However our current capabilities include:

- Quality systems certification - recently certified AS/NZS ISO 9001:2000.
- A history of achievement for customers including Adsteam Marine, Sydney Ferries and Port of Brisbane
- Existing access to critical personal and resources
- Compliance with Occupation health and safety standards

- Compliance with Environmental Standards
- Excellent Security
- Existing infrastructure including:
 - Cradle to accommodate vessels up to 2,500t , LOA 85m, beam 18m
 - Cradle has the ability to be split and slip a number of vessels together
 - Two mobile cranes up to 45 T lifting capacity, with max outreach of 25m
 - Fully equipped machining workshop
 - Undercover fabrication workshop
 - Water blasting equipment
 - Abrasive blasting equipment
 - Environmentally friendly Ultra high pressure water blaster to 40,000psi
 - Painting equipment and rigs
 - Elevated work platforms, Forklifts and Trucks to 9 tonne
 - Ship to shore power distribution to 100A
 - Fans, Floodlights, Gangways
 - Welders
 - Waste water and oily water disposal
 - Gas freeing
 - Fresh water supply
 - Tanks to collect waste oil, water and sewage water
 - Fire fighting equipment
 - Administration and management offices
 - Meeting rooms
 - Phones, faxes, email, photocopy machines and internet access
 - Air conditioned superintendent's office
 - Change rooms, lockers, ablution facilities, showers, lunch rooms
 - Ample parking
 - Well equipped first aid room

In Conclusion

To maintain a quality service to the marine industry, Brisbane Slipways needs to have a strong Quality Assurance system along with a stable permanent trained workforce. Quality Assurance certification has now been achieved and we have a stable trained workforce that we now need to grow.

A part in any defence contract would provide us the ability to continue to train and employ Australians well into the future. We feel this would increase our skill levels and those within the Australian Industry as a guarantee for the Nation's future.

The opportunity for us to partner our country and gain the opportunity to secure our future with in the Australian Ship Building industry is a major company priority. At present however we seem to be flying under the radar when it comes to this process. We would gladly appreciate any guidance or advice as to the best way forward that will help guarantee the Nations ability to be self reliant and Brisbane Slipways future.

Brisbane Slipways has existing physical and staff infrastructure to make a serious contribution to Australia's shipbuilding capabilities. We are enthusiastic about the future and look forward to working with Government and other industry players to develop our joint capabilities.

Yours sincerely

Gary Kidd

General Manager Operations

Ph (07) 3902 3555

Fx (07) 3902 3500

E-mail: gary@bse.net.au