

# Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union

## MEDIA RELEASE



### ABBOTT GOVERNMENT MUST ACT TO PROTECT AUSTRALIA'S SHIPBUILDING CAPABILITY.

Friday 15 May 2015

The Abbott Government's failure to address the crisis in naval shipbuilding has seen another 120 jobs lost today at ASC Shipbuilding in Adelaide.

With the launch of the first Air Warfare Destroyer (AWD) due later this month at ASC, and no further orders for vessels beyond the third AWD, it's time for the Federal Government to take decisive action.

"The Government's failure to take the option outlined in the 2013 Defence White Paper to order a fourth AWD is now costing jobs and putting our sovereign shipbuilding capability at risk," said Glenn Thompson, Assistant National Secretary of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union (AMWU).

Mr Thompson said once shipbuilding workers leave the industry a vital skill base would be lost.

"It's time for the Government to stop playing politics and to recognise that Australia's national security depends on strong and viable shipbuilding industry," Mr Thompson said.

"In recent weeks 130 shipbuilding jobs have gone at Forgacs in Newcastle, another 100 have been lost at BAE in Williamstown and now jobs are going in Adelaide."

Mr Thompson said after almost two years in power the Coalition had failed to set a direction for the industry, the Budget had failed to create new manufacturing jobs and shipbuilding was heading down the same path as the car industry.

Prior to taking power, former Defence Minister David Johnston told ASC workers an Abbott Government was committed to ordering a fourth AWD.

"The new Defence Minister Kevin Andrews should act on the 4<sup>th</sup> AWD as a matter of urgency and while he's at it, he should fast track the Pacific Patrol boats, tender" Mr Thompson said.

"In three weeks we've lost 350 jobs and another 2,500 shipbuilding jobs will be at risk unless the Government acts," he said.

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“The RAND Report outlined the importance of a continuous build program and the Government needs to take decisive action to plug the gap.”

“Workers at all three of Australia’s naval shipbuilding yards have developed their skill base to meet Australia’s strategic requirements but our national interest will be poorly served if a short-sighted Abbott Government fails to support those working in this vital industry.”

Glenn Thompson is available for interview.

Media contact John Hill 0412197079