

### Abbott and Baird Sink Shipbuilding in the NSW Hunter

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Just two weeks after BAE Maritime announced plans to pull out of Williamstown shipyard in Melbourne, Forgacs in Newcastle has announced 150 redundancies, with plans for more.

Without immediate action by state or federal Government, further redundancies as the year progresses will see the yard close by the end of 2015

“This situation is dire for workers, for the entire Hunter region, and the entire Australian shipbuilding industry,” said AMWU Assistant National Secretary Glenn Thompson.

“With BAE Williamstown look set to wind down and now Forgacs the entire industry hangs in the balance.

“Without immediate and urgent action we will see thousands of men and women out of work, and these vital defence skills lost to Australia forever.”

Both Forgacs and BAE have been crying out for Government contracts for years – whether defence or domestic ships, such as Sydney Ferries.

But both State and Federal Governments have failed to secure work for the local industry.

In fact, the NSW Government and Premier Mike Baird structured their Sydney Ferries tender to exclude local industry.

“Forgacs – like all Australian shipbuilding – needs a continuous build program of work to survive,” said Mr Thompson.

“This is a yard that has been in operation for over 100 years, and built iconic Australian ships like the ferries on Sydney Harbour and the *Aurora Australis* icebreaker.

“Now, it looks set to close the doors under Baird and Abbott.

“In a week where the NSW Government is announcing a record state budget surplus, this will be small comfort for workers in the Hunter.”

Mr Thompson said the AMWU had been working closely with Forgacs to alert the Government to the crisis the industry faces.

“Once workers leave the industry and get other jobs, their skills will be lost from shipbuilding, perhaps forever,” he said.

“Both NSW and the Federal Government have failed to listen and failed to act – and have caused this disaster.”

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