
Monday, 16 January, 2012

NEW ADVANCED MANUFACTURING CAPABILITIES FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA

South Australia is set to expand its defence capabilities in aerospace component manufacturing and processing.

Premier Jay Weatherill and Defence Industries Minister Jack Snelling today announced the establishment of advanced titanium aerospace component manufacture and processing capabilities.

South Australia has signed an agreement to provide assistance to BAE Systems Australia and Rosebank Engineering to establish two new aerospace component facilities at Edinburgh Parks.

BAE Systems Australia will establish Australia's largest advanced aerospace components operation at Edinburgh Parks to manufacture highly specialised, long thin titanium parts for the Joint Strike Fighter Vertical Tail Fin.

The JSF program will produce more than 3000 aircraft over the next 25 years for the United States and its allies.

The vertical tail fins are a major structural element of the aircraft, turning it during flight. This work, which would otherwise be undertaken in the United Kingdom, is worth about \$177 million.

Establishment of these nationally strategic capabilities greatly enhances the South Australian defence industry's bid to secure global supply contracts on the \$600 billion Joint Strike Fighter project.

Mr Weatherill today visited the Joint Strike Fighter production facility in Forth Worth, Texas, and was briefed by senior Lockheed Martin executives on the project status and Australian industry opportunities.

"Defence will form the foundation of South Australia's advanced manufacturing future and provide highly-skilled jobs," Mr Weatherill said.

"Already we have a strong reputation both nationally and globally for our expertise in defence manufacturing.

"These new capabilities open up a raft of opportunities in other aerospace, commercial and defence projects."

Defence Industries Minister Jack Snelling said the high precision, advanced machining work would be a major boost to capability and production capacity.

“To complement BAE System Australia’s activity, a new processing facility, providing specialised treatment and metal finishing services, will be established by Rosebank Engineering in Adelaide,” Mr Snelling said.

“Rosebank’s facility will be capable of supporting large JSF parts at full rate production.

“This combined capability does not currently exist in Australia. Its establishment in Adelaide will drive long term growth and job security in South Australia.”