

Minister Martin Hamilton-Smith

Minister for Investment and Trade

Friday, 14 August, 2015

South Australian defence industry to benefit from Indian industry agreement

The South Australian Government has signed an agreement with the Confederation of Indian Industry, which will foster closer economic ties and defence industry investment opportunities.

Minister for Investment and Trade Martin Hamilton-Smith signed the Memorandum of Understanding during the state's largest trade delegation to Bangalore, Delhi, Jaipur and Mumbai.

"Defence is a central pillar of the state's economy, employing 28,500 South Australians and contributing about \$2 billion to our economy each year," Mr Hamilton-Smith said.

"This Memorandum of Understanding to be led by Defence SA is a platform for ongoing success and supports companies seeking opportunities in defence, aerospace and advanced manufacturing sectors.

"South Australian defence companies including delegates Nova Systems, SAGE Automation and AU Space Services will benefit from a strategic advantage to attract investment, export products and services and drive jobs growth.

"With the developing globalisation of industry, it is clear that international inter-association recognition and co-operation can help to reinforce mutual objectives, foster co-operation and achieve economies of effort," Mr Hamilton-Smith said.

"Last year Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott extended defence cooperation to cover research, development and industry engagement.

The Australian and Indian Governments established a new Framework for Security Cooperation and this has paved the way for South Australia's defence industry.

"BAE Systems Australia has worked successfully with India in the past, supplying Hawk simulators and training devices to the Indian Air Force for Hawk pilot training. We are looking for more local companies to replicate this over the coming years.

"We have held a series of highly productive defence related meetings during this visit, and extended an invitation for the Confederation of Indian Industry to visit Adelaide early next year.

The Confederation of Indian Industry is India's premier business association with over 7900 members, from the private as well as public sectors.

Mr Hamilton-Smith was supported on the trade mission by Sir Angus Houston in his role as South Australia's Special Envoy Trade and Investment and the Defence Teaming Centre Chief Executive Officer Chris Burns.

“It is evident from the current South Australian trade mission that there has been a fundamental shift in the Indian Government's approach to its defence industry,” Mr Burns said.

“The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding is timely in that it allows South Australia's defence industry to collaborate through the auspices of the Defence Teaming Centre and the Confederation of Indian Industry to pursue mutually beneficial opportunities.

“The Indian Government's demonstrated commitment to supporting and reaping the national benefits of a viable defence industry is a lesson the Australian Government should well pay heed to and try to emulate.”