



# TRITON UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLES TO BOOST MARITIME SURVEILLANCE CAPABILITIES

**Thursday, 13 March 2014**

**Prime Minister  
Minister for Defence  
E&OE**

The Government has committed to the acquisition of the highly-capable Triton Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), subject to the successful completion of the US Navy development programme currently under way.

These aircraft will patrol Australia's vast ocean approaches, and work closely with other existing and future Australian Defence Force assets to secure our ocean resources, including energy resources off northern Australia, and help to protect our borders.

They will provide the Australian Defence Force with unprecedented maritime surveillance capabilities, operating at altitudes up to 55,000 feet over extremely long ranges while remaining airborne for up to 33 hours.

The Triton UAVs will be based in Adelaide, bringing significant economic benefits to South Australia.

This acquisition will require approximately \$140 million of new facilities and infrastructure, approximately \$100 million of which will be invested in South Australia. This potentially involves the expansion and enhancement of existing facilities and infrastructure at RAAF Base Edinburgh. Support requirements for Triton should create approximately \$20 million annually in further opportunities for South Australian companies.

The total number of Triton UAVs to be acquired and their introduction into service date will be further considered by Government in 2016, based on the Defence White Paper.

The Government has also announced a contract that includes \$78 million in work for BAE in Adelaide. This forms part of a five-year multi-million dollar contract with Boeing Defence Australia for the sustainment of the Royal Australian Air Force's E-7A Wedgetail aircraft.

The main contract will now run until June 2019 and includes engineering and maintenance support, repairs, spare parts and aircrew and maintenance training for the Wedgetail fleet.

This is a significant outcome for the Wedgetail programme and for the 290 industry staff employed directly on Wedgetail support in the Newcastle, Brisbane/Ipswich and Adelaide regions.

The Coalition Government is committed to building a strong, capable and sustainable Australian Defence Force.

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