



THE HON. JASON CLARE MP MINISTER FOR DEFENCE MATERIEL

First keel block delivered for new Australian warship

Minister for Defence Materiel Jason Clare today announced the delivery to Adelaide of the first keel block that will be used to construct *HMAS Hobart* – Australia’s first Air Warfare Destroyer.

“This is an important step forward in the \$8 billion project to construct three new warships,” Mr Clare said.

Construction of the AWDs involves 90 separate steel blocks being built at shipyards in Adelaide (ASC), Melbourne (BAE Systems), Newcastle (Forgacs) and Ferrol, Spain (Navantia).

Three sonar blocks are being constructed in Spain and the United Kingdom.

“Approximately 70 blocks will be shipped to Adelaide over the next four years where they will be consolidated into three new warships,” Mr Clare said.

Over the next six months it is expected that six blocks will be delivered from Melbourne and Newcastle to Adelaide.

This first block weighs around 180 tonnes. It is 18 metres long, 16 metres wide and five metres high and will form part of the keel of *HMAS Hobart*.

It was loaded on to a barge at BAE System’s Melbourne shipyard on 11 August.

The barge was towed by tug boat to the Common User Facility in Adelaide arriving on 15 August.

Last night it was removed from the barge and transported by a large multi-wheeled vehicle to the pre-fit-out facility.

Further work on the block including blast and paint, fitting pipes, installing communications and electrical cables and fitting internal walls will now be completed.

Two other hull blocks are currently being prepared for shipment from Melbourne to Adelaide.

Construction has begun on all main blocks for the first ship and work has also begun on blocks for the second ship, *HMAS Brisbane*.

Next year work will begin on blocks for the third ship, *HMAS Sydney* and the first ship will start to be consolidated in Adelaide.

Mr Clare thanked the more than 1,000 people currently working on the ships across the three Australian shipyards.

In May, the Government announced that the AWD Alliance had reallocated construction work on the project to reduce the schedule risk to both the AWD and Landing Helicopter Dock ship projects.

“The delivery of the first keel block is an important step forward in this project,” Mr Clare said.

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