
ANZAC DAY HOLIDAY Monday, 26 April 2010

TECHPORT AUSTRALIA GOES COMMERCIAL

Premier Mike Rann announced today that Techport Australia will officially begin commercial operations on Wednesday, when the brand new \$300 million State-owned shipbuilding facility at Osborne accepts its first paying customer.

“This marks the beginning of our State’s commercial shipbuilding, maintenance and service industry,” Mr Rann said.

Techport Australia is a common user shipbuilding facility, built by the State Government to service the construction of the \$8 billion air warfare destroyers at Techport Australia.

While the facility’s first priority is for use in building the Air Warfare Destroyers, the State Government has been keen to run Techport Australia as a commercial facility for other shipping contracts – both naval and civil.

Techport Australia’s giant shiplift, the largest in the Southern Hemisphere is capable of lifting 9300-tonne ships into and out of the water.

It will take its first commercial user on Wednesday when a SVITZER tug is lifted up for a month-long survey and maintenance overhaul.

“SVITZER is an international towage company, operating eight tugs in South Australia, four located in the Port of Adelaide and the remainder in Whyalla. They are the principal tugs used at Outer Harbor to ferry the large commercial cargo ships liners into and out of the port.

“We are delighted to have our first customer and we are actively seeking others.

“That is why I went to Washington in the US last year, to speak to senior Naval officials at the Pentagon about the advantages that we could offer for US naval vessels deployed in Southern Pacific region in using Techport facilities for services, repair and maintenance,” Mr Rann said

Mr Rann made the announcement on the start of commercial operations while joining thousands of South Australians visiting the ANZAC Class ship - the HMAS Arunta – which is currently berthed at Techport Australia’s 213 metre long wharf at Osborne.

The HMAS Arunta is only the second naval ship to berth at the new Techport Australia wharf.

“The many people visiting the HMAS Arunta today as part of the Navy’s Open Day, will for the first time, see the outstanding new facilities built by the State Government in an effort to create and support this new shipbuilding industry,” Mr Rann said.

“I am sure many South Australians are not aware the State Government has built this world-class facility at Osborne.

“Today provides a great opportunity for people to realise that we are on the cusp of a new industry that will generate huge economic benefits – the massive AWD project alone is expected to contribute in excess of \$1.4 billion to South Australia’s economy over the next 10 years.

“At present, the AWD Alliance employs over 700 people in South Australia, bringing this project to life. Over the coming decade, the AWDs are estimated to create 3000 direct and indirect jobs across the State.

“In the meantime, the more commercial shipping ventures we can encourage to use this outstanding piece of infrastructure, the more skilled jobs we can keep and sustain locally in this new industry,” Mr Rann said.

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