

Minister Martin Hamilton-Smith

Minister for Investment and Trade
Minister for Defence Industries
Minister for Veterans' Affairs

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ASC's capability with launch of *HMAS Farncomb* paves way for build of Future Submarines and ships in Australia

Today's launch of the first Collins Class submarine to undergo a new maintenance regime at ASC has underlined the shipbuilder's standing as a world-class facility, for the construction of 12 new submarines, new frigates and patrol vessels.

Defence Industries Minister Martin Hamilton-Smith said the roll-out of the *HMAS Farncomb* highlighted ASC's progress in achieving an international benchmark performance for naval shipbuilding and servicing.

"Under the old maintenance regime a full docking cycle for a Collins Class submarine could take more than three years but the *HMAS Farncomb* is scheduled to be complete in less than two," he said.

"ASC's workers should be congratulated for this tremendous achievement in the face of an uncertain future.

"The launch is also further evidence of ASC's capability to build the Future Submarines and I again call upon the Commonwealth to stick to its promise to build all 12 submarines here in South Australia."

Mr Hamilton-Smith said during his recent meetings in Japan it had become clear ASC is highly regarded.

"It was evident in my meetings with the Vice Minister for Defence, Kenji Wakamiya, and officials from the Japanese Ministry of Defence that there is a strong recognition of South Australia's role in naval shipbuilding," he said.

"They made it clear that they have confidence in being able to work closely with South Australia on a local build, if Japan is successful in winning the Future Submarines contract.

"That's because South Australia has the same capability, capacity and very similar facilities.

"We are now in a position where South Australia has developed a strong relationship with all three bidders for the Future Submarine project.

"All that remains is for the Commonwealth to live up to its election commitment."