

Minister Martin Hamilton-Smith

Minister for Defence Industries

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South Australia bids for defence jobs at Land Forces 2014

South Australia's Defence Industry capabilities will be on centre stage at the inaugural Land Forces 2014 Conference and Exposition in Brisbane today..

Defence Industries Minister Martin Hamilton-Smith said Land Forces is a premier exhibition that showcases land defence equipment, technology and services for the armies of Australia and the Asia-Pacific region.

"My focus at Land Forces 2014 will be to promote South Australia as the ideal choice to build and sustain major defence acquisition projects including Land 400," Mr Hamilton-Smith said.

"Land 400 is one of the largest Armoured Fighting Vehicle programs in the world. This project offers a significant opportunity for jobs growth in South Australia. In importance it is Army's equivalent to Navy's future submarine and Air Force's Joint Strike Fighters.

"The new Armoured Fighting Vehicles will replace the current fleets of Australian Light Armoured Vehicles and M113 Armoured Personnel Carriers, which are already built in Adelaide.

"Land 400 is worth more than \$10 billion, creating a huge opportunity to the South Australian economy. It involves the procurement of up to 1100 vehicles of three types, in staged phases over 15 to 20 years."

"There will also be a 35-year through life support requirement, worth another \$40 billion, which will provide a significant boost to the State's economy.

"The size and complexity of this project positions Land 400 as a truly nation-building opportunity, with the potential to create a major high technology industry for South Australia.

"South Australia has a reputation as one of Australia's leading Armoured Fighting Vehicle manufacturing and sustainment hubs, we are well placed to play a major role in Land 400."

"South Australia stands ready to deliver an integrated and custom built Land Combat System precinct, bringing together all the government and industry infrastructure needed to build, sustain, develop and upgrade the system over its life."

During Land Forces Mr Hamilton-Smith will actively lobby the Commonwealth to ensure equal opportunity for Australian industry participation in the project, compared to its preferred open competition model.

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“I will meet with senior Defence leaders and global defence primes likely to bid for Land 400, promoting the State’s credentials as the logical strategic and commercial location for assembly and sustainment of vehicles,” Mr Hamilton-Smith said.

“I will reinforce the State’s commitment to provide strategic infrastructure and investment in skills to support manufacture and sustainment of the vehicles in Adelaide. This would be modelled on our successful Techport Australia investment in support of the AWD project.

“On my recent defence industries mission to Canada and Germany I met with key international suppliers and likely contenders for Land 400, General Dynamics Land Systems – Canada and Rheinmetall MAN Military Vehicles.”

South Australia is well represented at Land Forces 2014 with a strong delegation of local industry representatives. Also attending are members of the Defence SA Advisory Board including Chair, Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston AC AFC.

Land Forces 2014 Conference and Exposition will be held in Brisbane from 22 - 25 September.