Media information

ASC navigates towards 30-year anniversary milestone

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As ASC approaches its 30-year anniversary milestone on Saturday, 29 August 2015, the submarine maintainer and shipbuilder says it remains steadily on track to achieve international benchmark submarine performance.

The company has changed significantly from its early beginnings when in August 1985 Kockums, Chicago Bridge & Iron, Wormald International and the Australian Industry Development Corporation joined forces to tender for the design and building of the Collins Class submarines for the Royal Australian Navy.

ASC Interim CEO, Stuart Whiley, said in recent times the organisation has completely transformed its submarine maintenance activities to ensure Navy has more submarines available, more often.

“Following the Coles Review into submarine sustainment, ASC implemented more than 30 infrastructure and improvement initiatives to bring the time it takes to complete a full cycle docking of a Collins Class submarine down from three years to just two,” Mr Whiley said.

Submarine hull cuts, together with the new $12 million maintenance support tower that brings the workforce and materials closer to the submarines, are part of a suite of activities that is driving efficiency and performance at ASC.

“One of the things we’ve done is cut the hull of the submarine, remove the main motor and diesel generators and refurbish and test them; outside the boat, leading to efficiency and schedule gains,” Mr Whiley said.

“We’ve then used our welding knowledge, gained during the Collins build program, to reweld the hull,” he said.

In the ASC Shipbuilding yard, the company is also recording productivity improvements in the construction of the three Air Warfare Destroyers.
ASC Shipbuilding CEO Mark Lamarre says the workforce is applying the lessons it has learnt from the construction of the first ship, which was launched in May, to the second and third ships.

“Ship 01 is now alongside the wharf at 75% complete, being prepared for combat systems light off and we’re seeing a better than 30% improvement on Ship 02, on a cost/percent complete basis and it’s approaching the completion of hull integration,” Mr Lamarre said.

“Block work on Ship 03 is also demonstrating significant cost savings and lead-time reduction,” he said.

ASC currently employees more than 2,600 people at its three facilities in South Australia and Western Australia and Mr Whiley said it is the people that have contributed to the company’s achievements over the last 30 years.

“I'm incredibly proud to be a part of such a highly-skilled and capable workforce that is supporting the Navy by building and maintaining key defence assets,” Mr Whiley said.

“The transformation at ASC over the last 30 years has been immense, and it wouldn’t have been possible without the support of our Submarine Enterprise and AWD Alliance partners, our largely Australian-based supply chain and network of industry experts,” he said.

“But what hasn’t changed over the last three decades is our commitment to supporting the nation’s most strategically important defence capabilities, and while we may have weathered our fair share of storms, this is a time to celebrate this important milestone, reflect on our many successes and embrace future opportunities,” Mr Whiley said.

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More information: Amy McDonald, Communications Manager.