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Western Australian small businesses will reap economic dividend from naval shipbuilding program

Luerssen has predicted local Western Australian small-to-medium-sized enterprises will reap a substantial economic dividend from the Australian Government's once-in-a-generation \$89 billion naval shipbuilding program.

In an address to the WA Defence Industry Conference Luerssen Defence Managing Director Mr Dirk Malgowski declared naval shipbuilding offered a huge new opportunity for Australia and WA in particular.

The heart of this new enterprise will be at Henderson, providing an export platform for global companies such as Luerssen to sell minor war vessels into the fast-growing markets of Indo-Asia.

Luerssen has partnered with Perth-based Cvmec (owner of Forgacs) to bid for the Australian Government's SEA1180 offshore patrol vessel (OPV) project. The Australian Government has already announced that 10 of the 12 OPVs will be constructed in WA.

Mr Malgowski said the partnership with Cvmec – which is building an \$80 million undercover shipbuilding facility at Henderson – will help transform the state into a national epicentre of manufacturing and naval shipbuilding excellence.

“We believe Australia stands on the brink of a new era of export-led naval shipbuilding,” he told the high-level conference.

“In our vision of this new era, Western Australia will lead the way. There is no better place from where to base an export industry and Western Australians should take enormous pride in that fact.”

With more than 140 years' experience in designing and building vessels, Luerssen also brings a subcontracting philosophy and culture to Australia, creating opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises.

"If selected for the OPV project we will give SMEs around the country access to our global supply chain.

"This is potentially huge for Australian business and literally opens the door to a world of possibilities," Mr Malgowski said.

Discussing the flow-on opportunities for SMEs, Mr Malgowski called for a "national mindset" towards shipbuilding in order to maximise employment and investment opportunities.

Sharing the maintenance work from the OPV program across a broad range of Australian towns and cities will be a "boon to local economies", he said.

It will also ensure that SMEs benefit greatly from the "economic halo" generated by the many products and services required to support the shipbuilding effort.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions you may have.

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